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Literature

THE SOUL OF THE ANTHOLOGY

PUBLISHED ON THE FOUNDATION ESTABLISHED
IN MEMORY OF CURTIS SEAMAN READ

THE SOUL OF THE ANTHOLOGY

BY

WILLIAM CRANSTON LAWTON

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THE CURTIS SEAMAN READ
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The present volume is the second published by the Yale University Press on the fund established in memory of Curtis Seaman Read. Born on August 21, 1895, the son of William A. and Caroline (Seaman) Read, he was a member of the Class of 1918, Yale College, leaving in his junior year to enter the United States Naval Reserve Flying Corps, in which he qualified as a Naval Aviator with an Ensign's commission. He was killed in active service near Dunkirk, France, in February, 1918.

This memorial was established by the fourteen surviving members of his class in the Scroll and Key Society of Yale College, to express the love and honor in which they held him.

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NOTE

SHORTLY before the Christian era, Meléagros, a Syrian, but a Greek poet, made a collection of brief lyrics, presumably Erotic in the main, including many of his own, and called it "Stephanos," the "Garland." There were several supplements by other editors in later centuries.

To us there has come down a most unwieldy mass of some four thousand brief poems, which in some measure includes —and may have gradually gathered about—the "Stephanos," and its supplements. Most of the contributors are late, and little if at all known.

The present translator regards the most valuable portions of this mass, collectively, as a fairly truthful composite picture of decadent Hellenic life. That is the meaning of his title, and the purpose of the first eleven sections, while Chapters XII-XXI attempt to give a fair sketch of other material in the great corpus, or of certain other sides from which it may be regarded. Even this division, however, is but a friendly frontier-line, constantly crossed and often forgotten. So the volume as a whole may possibly be viewed as a very slight general introduction to the "Anthology,"—which by the way should perhaps rather be called the "Corpus of late Greek lyric"; for, as to the much-argued "inscriptional" character of the collection, that is partly due to the especial character and tastes of the Greek people,—and is only partially true, anyway. The subject of each chapter can be further exemplified by poems cited in others.

Professor Mackail's Selection and indispensable Introductory Essay, the Loeb translation, or even the three-volume Didot, with Latin versions and French notes, need no introduction for readers of the present essay, and they will lead

any serious student much farther afield. The translator agrees, that in many cases there are better versions of these same poems, but he uses only his own, for reasons already well set forth by Touchstone in his glowing eulogy of Audrey. His debts to an endless line from Melesigenes, or Meleagros, to Mackail, can never be paid: but no one shares responsibility for his offenses.

W. C. L.

I

COMMON THINGS AND FOLK

OF and for such, it would seem, was the original Anthology, or rather, Garland, very largely made up. Meleager himself is never heroic, in his theme or the treatment of it. The most glorious shapes of the Homeric Olympus, the splendid past of Hellas, even the austere Stoic ideal of character, were perhaps unfamiliar, certainly uninteresting, to him. Among the contributors whom he names, a few of the great figures from the seventh and sixth centuries appear, but even of them, Sappho and Anacreon almost always, Alcaios and Archilochos often, were absorbed in purely personal emotions, while as for Simonides, most of his stately epitaphs and historic inscriptions probably crept into this collection much later than Meleager's day.

Of the entire present body of poems, most of the authors are late, obscure, indeed else unknown. Often the verses might date from any Greek land or decadent century. Humble themes, rustic sights and sounds, purely human experiences,—birth, wedlock, death, love, longing, loneliness,—are ever-recurrent throughout. On the whole, this is a boon. We crave not so much accurate details, as to these later unheroic Hellenic centuries, but, rather, assurance that here too, as in all times and peoples,

> "Some heart, altho' unknown,
> "Responds unto our own."

Instead of the faraway Olympians, we may even set at the gate, for this occasion, a guardian divinity hardly admitted into the Pantheon of any age.

The Little God Chance.

By Perses.

The little god Chance am I.
For a trifling thing if ye cry
Unto me in a well-timed hour,
To grant that much have I power.
Yet crave not a boon too great:
Of the folk in a lowly estate
Am I god, and so
On a poor man, only, my gift I bestow.

Another minstrel preaches,—and for all we can know, practiced,—a simplicity in his ménage that makes the "hermit of Walden" seem a luxurious pretender like Seneca.

The Simple Life.

By Leonidas.

They waste their lives away who roam
From land to land, without a home.
So waste not thou: but pass thy days
In some rude hut, where with its blaze
A tiny fire shall comfort thee.
A cake of scanty meal shall be
Well-kneaded on a hollowed stone
By thine own hands. Wild thyme alone,
Penny-royal, or bitter-sweet,
Thy simple table shall complete,
With salt for thy sole condiment.
—So bide content!

—Well, the translator confesses it, the "penny-royal" does seem the touch too much,—or too little. The hot eyes and rubicund face of a Herrick shut out from our minds any full belief in his devotion to the

"simple mess
"Of watercress,"

and somewhat the same doubt asserts itself, here again. Let us then listen, rather, to a voice less incredibly austere.

Moderation.

By Parmenion.

A scanty cloak is all I crave:
Not to my appetite a slave,
I on the Muses' blossoms feed.
Mere witless riches, such as breed
The horde of flatterers, I detest;
And well I know, the simplest fare is best.

That is not so far removed from the note of refined simplicity often struck by a certain chubby, early-grey, would-be peasant-poet from the Sabine land,—who, to be sure, semi-occasionally smote on Maecenas' statelier door, as Thoreau did at Emerson's, in quest of a "square meal."

But we may leave out all allusion to the Muses' cult, or her "blossoms," and the tone of real simplicity rings out so much the clearer.

"Low is my Porch."

By Leonidas.

This is Cleiton's humble cot.
  Tiny is the well-tilled field,
Small the neighboring vineyard plot,
  Scant the little woodlot's yield:
Yet with this his home content
Eighty years has Cleiton spent.

Possibly, in this rather stolid contentment, we miss the hint of pious thankfulness to the divinity, for such carefree comfort and for lifelong health. A hundred simple thankofferings could be quoted to supply that lack. That "gratitude is a

lively expectation of larger favors yet to come" is a definition not altogether cynical. On it all formal sacrifice is logically based.

Full Basket and Store.

By Philippos.

The grateful farmer Sosicles
To thee, Demeter, offers these
Few handfuls of the goodly yield
From furrows of his tiny field.
O Goddess, Giver of the grain,
So may his sickle yet again
From many a generous reaping come
Blunted, as now, to harvest-home.

Such contentment, and such simple thrifty gratitude, are not found merely in one class or occupation alone. Take, just for instance, a humble fisherman.

A Crab-shell!

By Maecius.

O thou, Priapos, who hast thy delight
In seabeat crag and shoreward island rocks,
Paris the fisherman hangs here for Thee
A hardshell crab, caught in his pliant reeds.
The roasted meat, indeed, the lucky man
Passed under his own well-worn tooth. The part
Inedible alone has come to Thee.
Do Thou accord, in turn,—no wondrous boon,
Divine One, but, thro' his successful lines,
Peace, whensoe'er aloud his hunger cries!

As was intimated at first, these busy humble folk do not often lift their eyes so high as Zeus and his stateliest children, Athenè and Apollo,—the favorite Triad of Homer.

The next example is no real exception. Hermes, like his younger brother goat-foot Pan, is of Arcadian birth, and always closest of gods to man. Heracles, again, doubtless remained quite half-human, with very human failings, as is here intimated. The Greek man is rarely over-reverent in any age: Euripides, and his savage critic Aristophanes, alike make Heracles a drunken glutton. This poem is also a truthful illustration of the gruff reluctance with which the rustic so generally pays his churchly or other tithes from hard-earned savings,—whatso his race, land, or age.

Two Patron-Gods.

By Antipater.

Lord Hermes is not hard to please.
Fresh honey from the forest-trees,
Or milk outpoured, delights his eyes.
With Heracles 'tis otherwise:
For he demands a fatted lamb,
Or, it may be, a full-grown ram.
The sheep from fear of wolves he frees?
Ay, but what boots it, whether ravening beast
Or the Protector on the flock shall feast?

Even this complaint has no real bitterness: the villager must indulge his privilege of fault-finding.

But often the glimpse of peaceful rusticity includes no hint of god or even of mythic fancy. Sometimes it would seem that even the most vividly imagined superhuman shapes, Satyr, Fountain-nymph, or Hamadryad, had quite vanished. The latter is certainly not here alluded to, much less is high Zeus recalled, even in a direct address to his favorite tree, the oak.

The poet Lowell used to insist, that there was not only a real mutual tie of love between him and many a tree, but that

its murmurous silence was often more companionable than any human speech. And he, also, like Landor and Tennyson, brooded tenderly over the Hamadryad-fancy. This ancient poet seems quite untaught as to any power of "That which dwelt within the bark" to take human shape, or even to respond, as from the "Talking Oak." Yet, stript of all mythic suggestion as it is, this little personal appeal is pure though very simple poetry: a figurative picture of a generous, beneficent, almost human spirit, conscious of the comfort he extends to all.

Noontide Shadows.

By Antiphilos.

O lofty oak, from boughs on high
Casting a shade for those who lie
Beneath, the sultry glare to shun,
Kindlier protector from the sun
Than well-tiled roofs: the dove's retreat,
Cicadas' haven from the heat,
Protect me also from the noontide blaze,
Who flee to thy cool leaves in the midsummer days.

The one essential natural charm lacking here is the running stream of cold water in a thirsty land. That may be supplied by a kindly human hand, with genuine Greek reticence, or restraint, in the proffer.

"Drink, Weary Pilgrim."

By Nikias.

Rest, thou tired wayfarer, at ease
  Beneath the poplar-trees.
Draw nigh unto the spring, and drink.
  Afar, hereafter, think
How Simos set this font beside
  Gillos, his child, who died.

Or by a mere natural spring and brook may stand, doubtless in tinted marble, the familiar fully-humanized shape of Hermes the Guide, the constant friend of man.

A Wayside Restingplace.

Anon.

Here under shadowy junipers,
With Hermes, Guardian of the Way,
Pause for a while, ye wanderers:
—Not all the passing throng, but they
Who, their long journey wandering,
A parching thirst endure. The spring
From stones upgushing cold and clear,
The shaded seats, the breezes, here
Shall bring for toil-worn frames repose.
The sultry dogstar's breath at noon,
Perilous in the Summer's close,
Ye shall escape: and, parting soon,
Shall bless the name, (as well ye may,)
Of Hermes, Guardian of the Way.

Though clearly well-pleased with his earthly environment, the later Greek man did not feel exactly that intimate personal tie between inanimate nature and himself, just cited from Lowell, but which Wordsworth most of all poets has fully described, and truly felt. The more imaginative earlier Hellenes peopled everything about them with hidden or metamorphosed but conscious beings mightier than man. But the plodding peasant of any age has doubtless often felt dumbly his utter loneliness, his alienation from material things that are destined to outlast us: a feeling which Emerson has half-uttered in verses that seem directly influenced by the following lines.

"Hamatreya."

Anon.

Once was I Polydoros' field,
Who now Menippos' harvest yield.
So am I handed on and on.
Each deems he owns me, but anon
Another cometh!
Property of none
In sooth am I, but Destiny's alone.

Frankly realized, as the natural goal of this rather uneventful pilgrimage, Death has neither any abnormal charm, nor yet, in most cases, especial terror. Indeed, the family tomb, standing ready whenever the need shall arrive, is often a perfectly familiar part of the everyday actual outlook.

End of the Road.

Anon.

Androtion built me, as a resting-place
For all his race,
Wife, children,—and his own:
Yet hold I none.
Late may it be ere all to me have passed,
—The youngest, last.

The unnatural—because untimely—death of children is indeed the one stroke of Fate which the surviving parents can hardly endure. Exemption from this cruel blow is not forgotten in the delineation of the ideally happy life. Neither does the village poet forget, if he had ever heard it, Solon's dictum: "Count no life blest, or wretched, till its end."

An Ideal Life.

By Carphyllides.

Lament not at my grave, O passer-by:
Nothing deserving of thy grief had I.
I have left my children's children: with my wife
I lived contented to the end of life.
Three children I saw wedded: on my breast
Often I rocked their little ones to rest.
No deaths, nor grievous illness, have they known.
When I departed,—without pain or moan,—
They poured libations where my body lay,
While to the Blessed Land I sped away.

Again the moderation, the restraint, of true Greek art is here. Any such word as

"The best is yet to be,
"The last of life, for which the first was made,"

the ever-youthful, life-loving, joy-loving Hellenic spirit could not truthfully utter. But the dismal laments of a Mimnermos over the flight of youth were generally felt to be both unmanly and extravagant. "I lived *contented* to the end": the phrase may cut decidedly both ways: content to live on, indeed, but quite as ready for rest as is the mellow fruit or yellowing leaf to release its hold betimes. Perhaps, in the uneventful round of rustic life, the absolute naturalness of our own quickly completed cycle, from earth to earth again, is more adequately and impressively taught and more fully accepted than in bustling cities. The physical helplessness of age is clearly marked as a return to the equally helpless level of childhood, both eating the bread of idleness, while the man in full vigor must plough and reap for both: a little time. The recurrent warning in each brief day, that sinks to dusk as swift as it leaped to high noon, the ever-circling year of birth and fruitage and death in the fields, the quick

passing of flower, fruit, and grain, are to the peasant as familiar as are the lowly graves of the long ancestral line. The domestic animals, even, have a natural life far briefer than man's, who sees successive generations of favorite horses and hounds pass him by. There is more than submission in such a cheery response as

"Assum igitur!"

By Leonidas.

"Even as a vine upon her lifeless prop,
"So on my staff do I uphold myself.
"And meantime Death to Hades summons me:
" 'What profits it if some three Springs, or four,
" 'Thou warm thee in the sun?' " So having said,
The old man tranquilly put off his life,
Migrating to the mute majority.

There is no need to add any colophon to this little roll of unpretentious verse. So far from any attempt to exhaust the suitable material, or even to illuminate all phases of the theme, it is desired merely to set the permanent scene,—or, changing the metaphor, to indicate the key in which many, perhaps most, of the best in this great mass of poems were composed, and should be heard.

The rustic poet approves Marpessa's womanly choice, in accepting the life of the toil-worn, earthward-bent, swift-aging peasant rather than share the endless glories of the radiant Prince of Gods himself.

II

ANIMALS

OF course the minor poets of decadent Hellas will hardly offer any valuable addition to biological data. The chief object, even of an exhaustive survey, could be little more than to throw a cross-light, from their physical environment, on the character of the Greek people: to define their attitude toward "St. Francis' little brothers," the dumb beasts. Even the present more casual use of a score or more of the Epigrammata may accomplish so much for the memory of this gentle and refined race of men all but forgotten.

As for the great beasts of prey, they are naturally rather remote. Tigers, for instance, are hardly even imagined in their native haunts, but only as obedient subjects of Dionysos, Cybelè, and other Oriental deities (or even of Eros), whose chariots they draw. The lion, so constantly used in Homeric similes, is in the Decadence almost equally unfamiliar. One special subject treated, at unusual length, by a long series of rival narrators, is the adventure of Cybelè's unsexed priest, who meets the ravenous king of beasts in a lonely mountain pass,—and puts him to flight by the wild music of his clashing cymbals and by his own fearlessness of spirit. This is all as distinctly Oriental, in intention, as Aischylos' "Persians."

But even a dead lion is a fit part only of a remote Eastern scene, *e.g.*, in an Arabian desert. (Of course the nymphs, and Pan, can follow the Greek imagination anywhither.)

Trophy to Pan.

By Paulus Silentiarius.

Having drawn off the tawny lion's skin,
With head attached, his mouth yet wide agape,

And every paw with the five claws equipt,
The Arab Teucer hangs it on a pine
For thee, O goatfoot Pan.
His spear, beside,
On whose gnawed tip the marks of teeth remain,
Where the beast vented his uproarious rage.
The Water-nymphs with Dryad sisters joined
Circle in joyous dance: for they as well
Had often by that lion been appalled.

When a deer, however, is slain and similarly treated, the scene is definitely located near Arcadian Erymanthos, where the great boar's haunt was in Heracles' day. Both these animals were familiar even to the latest Greeks. We saw numberless fresh wild boar tracks on Mount Ida, in October, 1881.

One special friend of Francis seems to have been still a tolerably familiar figure in Greece itself: I mean the wolf. He is a deadly foe to man, of course, but is not seen hunting in dangerous packs. When the single spent swimmer, escaping while his vessel sank, barely reaches the deserted shore, Nemesis awaits him in the shape of what may be fairly called a timber-wolf, that leaps from the thicket to devour him.

The hare is naturally imagined as lawful prey, pursued by man's servant, the hound. Here, however, the sympathy of an ancient Charles Dudley Warner or T. W. Higginson could easily be drawn to the hunted, as when she, too, escapes the dog on land,—only to find the crueler jaws of the dog-fish (shark?) awaiting her when she leaps into the water.

But all these subjects suggest rather pictures than any realistic action: and doubtless the Greek usually knew the lion, at least, only from works of art. One such, of heroic size, stood at Thermopylae, as a memorial of Leonidas: a man leonine in nature as in name. To this monument as their

subject one prefers to ascribe the verses accredited in the Anthology to Simonides.

A Hero's Monument.

By Simonides.

Sole Monarch among beasts am I:
He among men was chief alone
Whose rest I guard, here set on high
Carven upon his tomb, in stone.

(But another reading introduces the name of an obscure Leon as the occupant of the grave.)

The rival monarch of the wild, the eagle, is no less naturally associated with Pindaric loftiness of song, or with a hero's valor. One such sculptured memorial will illustrate this merely figurative use.

A Hero's Tomb.

By Antipater of Sidon.

Traveler. Bird that art servitor to Kronian Zeus,
Why dost thou perch thus grimly on the tomb
Of Aristomenes?

Eagle. To mortal man
I bring this message: Even as I excel
Above all birds, so he among the youths.
The timid doves on cowards' graves may sit:
But we in men unterrified delight.

Lord Tennyson was a lifelong classical student. An American scholar, Dr. Mustard, has made an interesting volume, recording the direct classical echoes in his works, and citing the originals from ancient poets' words beside them. From a passage like this the Victorian laureate might have taken the

suggestion for that rather cavalierly comparison, made by the lover of the Princess, between Ida, his own choice, and the lady-loves of his two devoted esquires:

"The dove may murmur of the dove,
"The crane may chatter of the crane, but I,
An eagle, clang an eagle to the sphere."

More interesting is the treatment of creatures domesticated, or in constant relations with man. Here the horse claims unquestioned precedence. The divine steeds of the Homeric Achilles, one of whom prophesies his death, in human speech,—the races in chariots, and even of saddle horses, at Olympia and elsewhere,—the effective use of the steed in the Panathenaic procession on the Parthenon frieze, —and especially the social as well as military superiority of the "Rider" or Knight (Hippeus),—will at once come to mind. Even the centaur-phantasy may be a survival of the impression made by cavalry upon a rude folk, which at first, like Montezuma's people, supposed the steed with his rider to be a single resistless assailant. Nevertheless, no really intimate comradeship is indicated, between man and horse, at least in these poems. A favorite poetic treatment of the horse is the contrast between youthful triumphs and the drudgery to which his old age is condemned. The finest example mentions all the four chief religious and athletic festivals of the Hellenes: though Pisa,—meaning Olympia,—is barely named.

A Fallen Champion.

By Archias of Mitylene.

I,—who outstript the winds in speed,
Famed above every other steed,
"Eagle" my name, as victor crowned
On Pythian Phoebus' holy ground,

Where as if wing'd indeed I flew,
At Pisa, and Nemea too,
The lion's nurse, and where loud roar
Both seas upon the Isthmian shore,—
Must bear the chafing collar's pain
Instead of my light bridle rein,
And toil to crush Demeter's grain
With rough mill-stones.
Like Heracles,
After a thousand victories
I stoop my high heroic pride,
To the base yoke of slavery tied.

The comparison seems bold, but is not pathetic enough. Heracles became Omphale's slave under no compulsion, save Eros'.

Our indignation in behalf of this classical "Black Beauty" is not wholly sated, even when, on another leaf, we find a humbler servitor of man more generously pensioned.

Respite Earned.

By Adaios.

Outworn by years, and furrows too,
The ox no more his task could do.
Alcon revered the well-spent life,
Nor doomed him to the deadly knife.
He in the long grass lowing now
Exults in freedom from the plow.

There is another poem that is distinctly sympathetic in spirit toward this "laborious race." It is worth quoting, not for any marked poetic merit, but because this tone of warmer interest in the beast is not as frequent as we could wish.

Double Burdens.

By Philippos.

We patient oxen that the cornland till
In the sea also now a task fulfill.
In quest no more of grain but fish, we still
A shareless furrow in the water set,
For we with ropes are harnessed to the net.
—Laborious race! On land and deep we now
In quest of harvest drag the heavy plow!

To the driver of oxen the dead man makes elsewhere his appeal, not to drag the share over his tumulus. A kindly respect, though not especial affection, seems to be the portion of this creature so intimately associated, by Christian tradition and art, with the Nativity.

The comparative absence of the dog from the family circle will doubtless surprise the Occidental reader, unless he has spent a day, and a night, in Stamboul or Smyrna, or otherwise become acquainted with the Brahmin's typical unclean beast. Here, as so often, the Greek is in his feelings about halfway between "the ends of the earth." He could—and can—understand, more easily than we, the indignant query, older than any Epigramma of our collection: "Is thy servant *a dog*, that he should do this thing?"

It was of this ownerless predatory vagabond, as he is today in the Orient, of this scavenger and byword, that the lampooner of the Laödiceans was thinking, when he linked them with cobra, toad, and viper, and, finally, with the dog, as things to be most strenuously avoided.

The huntsman's hound, and horse, are merely listed, or carven on his tomb, amongst the means and implements of his craft, not as his comrades.

When the dog perishes by a pitiful death, her master's name is mentioned, but not as a mourner.

Too Late.

By Antipater of Sidon.

Midas' hound, Lampò, thirst has slain,
Tho' hard she toiled for life, in vain.
In the moist dell her paws she plied:
No water came: She drooped, and died.
—That instant gushed the stream amain:
Your vengeance, Nymphs, for many a roe-deer slain!

One recalls the great picture formerly hung in the Metropolitan Museum of New York City, where the water-nymphs would save the stag even from angry Artemis' arrows.

In another case not even the name of a master appears, and we might almost fancy Lycas ("Wolfling") had heard "the call of the wild" and became a free hunter. (These feminine names for hounds are no accident. The Greeks considered the female as the superior in intelligence and courage.)

A Dog of Thessaly.

By Simonides. (?)

Tho' in thy tomb thou liest dead,
The beasts shall hold thee still in dread,
Lycas, the huntress. Ossa's peak
And glorious Pelion well might speak,
Yea, and Cithaeron's lonely crest,
For they have known thy prowess best.

However, the "tomb," or, at least, the simple tumulus, presupposes a grateful human hand, no doubt her master's. But even the herdsman's dog shows little gratitude, or no intelligence, when he gnaws asunder the honey-sweetened rope, while his master risked his own life for more booty, and so from the cliff-face

"Down to dark Hades fell his lord!"

One direct utterance of thanks for canine loyalty Professor Mackail has admitted into his select "First five hundred" gems from the Anthology.

Faithful Servant.

By Tymnes.

This stone says, that beneath lies dead
A white dog, but of Malta bred.
Eumelos found him stanch and true.
"Bull" was the name he answered to
While yet he was:—but now that name
The silent paths of darkness claim.

Another, vaguer, and anonymous, of similar tone, included in Mackail's selections, is from an actual inscription, but not in the Anthology MSS. at all.

The tomb, monument, carven epitaph, for dogs, are not altogether imaginary. At Mitylene, in 1881, a native Greek miller showed us a small stone, perhaps a foot in length, with a poodle-like dog carved in a shallow recess. An inscription, not difficult to read, is more vaguely recalled. Indeed the whole "monument" was in a rather suspiciously good state of preservation. A free translation of this inscription was printed in the Assos Report of 1882.

Quite as lonely and as friendless as in the Occident, hardly less a butt of ridicule than in modern days, appears, on many occasions, the goat. Travelers in the Levant have now one serious grievance against him, as codefendant with his Osmanli master, who has allowed him to strip of all vegetation many a landscape where should still bloom a glorious Garden of the Gods. Such pilgrims will be little distressed at a grim prophecy, which recalls the Bandusian spring of Horace.

Vine and Goat.

By Euenos.

Even if thou gnaw me to the root,
Yet I shall bear sufficient fruit
To make libation over thee
When a burnt-offering thou shalt be!

In a far more picturesque setting his fate remains the same. But the whole poem is a reminder of the powerful influence this rather uncanny creature had once, at least, exerted upon the semi-reverent Hellenic mind. Not Pan alone; all his satyr-train also are at once goatish, and yet superhuman. So, too, the noblest form of Greek literary art never escaped the name or the mask of the goat: "Tragedy" is "goat-song."

Goat and Goat-god.

By Agathias Scholasticus.

Hornèd beast to hornèd god,
Shaggy-hair'd to shaggy leggèd,
Springer to the master-leaper,
Thicket-seeker to coppice-hunter,—
By the cliff to clamberer Pan
Charicles his worshipper
Offers here a tawny goat.

Yet even to this frowzy hermit of the rocks a word of half-contemptuous sympathy may be tost. The real subject is the prowess of the Cretan bowman, who makes the gift to the Delian shrine. This reference is of course to a breed of wild goats.

The Bow Unstrung.

By Callimachos.

Ye Cynthian goats, take heart again!
In Artemis' Ortygian fane
Echemmos' archery is laid,
Wherewith in each high Cretan glade
So often ye were overthrown.
The goddess bids you now in peace possess your own.

The sheep doubtless is, as Professor Roscher rather drolly says, in discussing the origin of Pan, "a far less daemonic animal than the goat." Her character seems hardly to have impressed itself on the Greek at all. Such patient humility as makes her "dumb before her shearers" would hardly appeal to him. Even a pet lamb might be hard to find in Hellenic poetry or Hellenic lands. The flock is little more than part of the landscape-setting for the human picture. If the guardian is slain, or asleep, they may wander, and, if they escape the wolf, will instinctively seek the home shelter at nightfall. "No more but so."

Perhaps this notable absence of the sheep and lamb is fair negative evidence on a question sometimes debated: *viz.*, the direct or remoter influence of Hebraic poetry in classical lands. If Virgil had actually borrowed from David or Isaiah, for instance, these still later Greeks might be expected to show similar coloring. But the sheep dumb in the presence of the shearer and the humble patience she illustrates, are alike un-Hellenic. Meek submission is a Christian virtue.

One poem may be offered here as such negative evidence. The sheep are mentioned, are present: yet even when the wolf comes they are not thought of. This is no homely or realistic sketch, but a rather too artificial and conventional scene, possibly a description of an actual painting or medallion.

Eros as Herdsman.

By Myrinos.

Thyrsis,—the lad who would keep
For the rustic Nymphs their sheep,
Whose piping all but exceeds
The performance of Pan with the reeds,—
Having quaffed too freely the wine,
Here under a shadowy pine
Is lying at noonday asleep.
Eros himself has taken
The shepherd's staff.
But awaken,
Ye Nymphs, awaken the keeper,
The bold wolf-killer, the sleeper,
Lest, to the beasts that stray
In the forest, Love be a prey.

This all suggests rather a courtly minstrel who might never have seen—or at least never given a second glance at —real sheep or shepherds.

The cat, reverently embalmed in early Egypt, honorably placed in the early Minoan art, can hardly have been wholly unknown later. For her comparative absence, as well as for the dog's, some apology should doubtless be offered, though by no means all of us share Miss Repplier's enthusiastic affection. Indeed, the domestic cat's psychology is about as closely sealed from humanity as that of her big jungle-sisters, who are also occasionally no less "domesticated."

Whether the ordinary mouser of the Hellenic age was rather a weasel, or ferret, is perhaps neither a poetic nor here a vital question. When the murder of a pet partridge is made doubly atrocious by the devouring of his head, before discovery and fitting interment, solution of the problem of genus and species of the slayer is furthered but little. Nothing more lyrical seems available, so far as the translator

recalls. The cat does not love the limelight: and still less does the weasel.

The smallest and most omnipresent of man's quadruped companions has rarely, save now and then for a moping prisoner, developed into anything like comradeship. His tastes and habits do not seem to be affected by the centuries.

Poor Scholar's Advice to Mice.

By Ariston.

If ye come hither, mice, for bread,
'Twere wiser far to seek instead
Another haunt. Our cot is small.
Go where full many a scrap will fall,
From plenteous banquets. There with cheese
And raisins cram ye as ye please.
—If on my books again ye whet
A tooth, that graceless feast ye surely shall regret!

Rather than make our farewells, however, in such lowly surroundings, we may revert for a moment to the outdoor world. The final selection is perhaps rather a Nemesis-poem. It hints at the revenge Nature and her children may enjoy upon Man's handicraft and Man himself: the subject so powerfully handled by R. K. in the "Coming in of the jungle."

Hunter and Hunted.

Anon.

Upon the tomb of huntsman Pericles,
The son of Archias, are carven these
Memorials: javelins, nets that hang on stakes,
Dogs, horses. Yet all these the sculptor makes:
Mere shapes of stone.
Live beasts with care-free heart
Play all about. The hunter must depart,

A youth of twenty springs, his couch to make
Where never he that slumbers shall awake.

The general impression left upon the reader is, doubtless, of a genial and fairly familiar relation with the lower animals, tame or wild, but not of close or constant dependence on any of them. However, this whole body of Greek verse is chiefly devoted to the interrelations and personal feelings of men—and women. The other animals are, by comparison, be it said once more, merely a part of the stage setting, the natural environment.

III

BIRDS AND INSECTS

THESE paired subjects may be rather surprising, but still more so is it, at least to the writer, to find that there is comparatively little to be said on the former, and far more than space will allow on the latter.

There is hardly an indication of real attention paid to, *e.g.*, the eagle, already mentioned, the hawk, or even Athenè's owl. The "halcyon," or kingfisher, seems at times, with her shrill cries, to be lamenting men lost at sea, as she hovers over their shoreward tumuli. An unknown singing-girl's epitaph hails her as

> "Musa, blue-eyed, melodious nightingale,"

and the name "Nightingales" is applied also to a lost poet's lyrics, probably first by himself. Doves, or wood-pigeons, share the oak's shade, at sultry midsummer's noon, with cicada—and man. The wryneck is mentioned, in a love-sick girl's incantations to win back her fickle lover, by Theocritus; and the likeness of the same bird, wrought of gold and carved amethyst for a Thessalian sorceress's gift to Cypria's shrine, is perhaps offered with the same ulterior purpose. Erinna the poetess is called a swan, as well as a bee; and again, with more elaboration, not only is she the swan, but "we the countless myriads" of worthless *poetae minores* are but

> "Daws, dispersed thro' all the clouds of Spring."

(The modern discussions on the supposed and real merits of "the trumpeter swan's signal-cry dropping from heaven," or on the notes of the bird generally, are rather aside from the

present plan. By us, the swan is not valued for his musical genius.)

More can be said of the swallow. A well-known vase-painting represents mankind eagerly hailing her coming from Egypt, as the harbinger of Spring. So she appears, too, in the Anthology, not rarely. But often, again, human voices of impatient complaining would silence her untimely chatter.

Insomnia.

By Agathias.

From nightlong vigil with my sighs
Gladly I see grey Dawn arise
To grant to me the long'd-for grace
Of sleep, but for a little space.
Yet swallows twitter all about,
Driving my hopes of slumber out,
And hold my tear-swoll'n eyes awake
To sorrow for Rhodanthè's sake. . . .

Almost always her twitterings are accounted most dolorous, and are ascribed to grief over her tragic fate as a mortal, and her unwelcome metamorphosis. The legend is an especially revolting one, and of interest only as causing her to be addressed as a kindred "Attic maiden."

No less often reviled, as an undesired messenger of the day's approach, is the cock.

Unwelcome Signal.

By Antipater.

Morn is coming, Chrysilla. Long since yon herald of day-dawn,
Sounding his signal-note, welcomed the light of the sun.
O most jealous of birds, on thee may utter destruction
Fall, who art driving me forth into the chatter of youths!

The one clear-voiced tribute of regret for a dead songster refers to a "Garden acquaintance" or free woodland-dweller, not to a caged canary, and is too slight to compare with any famous Roman elegy, on the captive sparrow, or even parrot.

Silent Singer.

By Tynnes.

Thou favorite of the Graces
Who into air didst send
Glad carols without end,
Now thou art snatched away,
All the dear sunlit places
That were thy haunts of old,
And thy sweet roundelay,
The paths of darkness hold.

One appeal, here again to the swallow, has been reserved till the last, to bridge and explain the transition to the more novel subject of insects. Even this poem already intimates that the birds were not the most popular natural musicians.

Minstrels Both.

By Euenos.

Attic maiden honey-nourish'd,
Wilt thou snatch the tuneful cricket,
Tuneful thou, to feed thy children?
Wing'd thou art, as she is wingèd,
Guest, no less than she, of Summer.
Wilt thou not straightway release her?
Neither just nor seemly is it
That a singer
By a singer's mouth should perish.

Of all insects, bees are doubtless the most interesting. Though they come so close to human life, they are, of course,

at most mere semicaptives, not really domesticated at all. There is evidence, in and outside of the Anthology, that the bee was in some peculiar sense regarded as initiated into the superhuman Mysteries. In the tale of the youth Rhoecus, who, propping an aged tree, unconsciously saves the Hamadryad's life, woos, wins her love,—and forgets her, the bee is the messenger from the Nature-power to the man, and strives to remind him of his neglected tryst. Handed down rather barely by a nameless Greek scholiast, the tale is elaborated in poetic treatment by Landor ("The Hamadryad") and by Lowell ("Rhoecus"). Meleager, also, makes the bee try to utter to Heliodora a larger truth of life, which Eros, however, had already taught to her and her poet-lover. Indeed, the sting of the honey-bringer is its emblem;—lovers' happiness must pay its full price in pain.

In a popular poem of Whittier, the death of one of the family must be announced to the bees: just why, perhaps no delver in Teutonic or Keltic folklore can tell with confidence. Certainly it gives the busy insect some unique "daemonic" importance. The recurrence in Greek is at least a most interesting coincidence: perhaps much more.

"Telling the Bees."

Anon.

O Naiads, and ye chill
Pastures along the hill,
Tell the bees, when
Upon the track of Spring they come again,
That, while he set his snares
For the high-leaping hares,
Aged Leukippos on a wintry night
Has perished.
It was ever his delight

To lavish on the hives his loving labor.
The upland dells and precipices steep
Shall long for his departure weep
Who to the heights was aye a loving neighbor.

This genial sketch illustrates well how tantalizing almost any page of the great Corpus Epigrammatum will prove. Not a word as to the time, land, local environment or life-story of Leukippos or of his poet can we ever hope to receive. He seems real. He, or his creator, was surely a lover of Nature in all her moods, or, at least, quite fearless of them. The hares, and the bitter cold, send perchance a stray thought toward the equally unknown land glimpsed in Keats' Eve of St. Agnes. "The rest is silence."

Doubtless old Leukippos took moderate toll, at the proper season, in return for his watchful care. The next and last bit of apiary evidence for which there will be space introduces a more illustrious—and, 'tis to be feared, a greedier—bee-ward. This time also the honey seems "redolent of *wild* thyme," to use a Virgilian phrase, though some human (or divine) improvements in the economy of the hive may be indicated. The tone is too frivolous to offer safe archaeological data.

Be Busy, Bees!

By Zonas.

Tawny hive-creatures, speed ye forth, with diligence to get
From downy apple, clustered grape, thyme, poppy, violet,
The honey ye must promptly store in vessels, without waste,
So Pan, the honey-warden, may delight his dainty taste.
But yet, when he shall smoke you out and on your treasure seize,
—I'll pray he leaves a little share behind for you, O bees!

The overwhelming weight of evidence seems to make clear that the favorite music-maker of rustic Hellas was not

a bird at all, but an insect, or genus of insects, to which we assign a very humble place, despite a few tributes to "the cricket on the hearth," or the locust in the summer fields. When the translators speak of cicada, cicala, grasshopper, locust, the Greek tettix is regularly meant. A smaller creature, akrís (cricket?), is more or less accurately distinguishable. Meleager is at his half-cheerful best in his loving tributes to the free and to the captive minstrel. The tone of attachment and gratitude is surely sincere.

The Cicada, Free.

By Meleager.

High-perched upon a leafy bough,
Dew-drunken, O Cicada, thou
  Of serrate legs and swarthy skin,
Thy solitary music now,
  Dear to the Dryads, dost begin:
A novel song, a joyous tune,
  Reëchoing Pan's melodious strain.
  So, freed of Eros' gladsome pain,
I may enjoy a nap at noon,
  Here in the shadow of the plane.

The Cricket, Captive.

By Meleager.

Consoler of my discontent,
  To sleep beguiling me full oft
With tones of gentle languishment,
  Thou shrill-winged Muse of field and croft,
Born mimic of the lyric strings,
Touch with thy feet those vocal wings,
O cricket! From the agony
Of wakeful worry rescue me,

Weaving those simple notes of thine
That still to love the soul incline.
The dawning of another day
Shall bring thee drops of dewy spray,
And creeping evergreen, this service to repay.

A very different poem elaborates the theme just touched on by Meleager, the insect's accurate mimicry of the harp. It illustrates the marvel-loving and music-loving sides of Hellenism, also, and deserves quotation in full, though in its length, and by its narrative character, it quite breaks over the limits of the Epigramma proper.

Cicada Music-lover.

By Paulus Silentiarius.

This bronze cicada Locrian Eunomos
To Lycoreian Apollo dedicates,
Memorial of a contest with the harps,
Where Parthes as his rival had appeared.
  Quick to the quill the Locrian tortoise-shell
Melodiously was resounding, when
With a hoarse murmurous sound the harpstring snapt!
  Yet ere the note of rythmic harmony
Could waver, a cicada lightly leaped,
Chirping, to seat himself upon the harp.
He caught the note up from the parted string.
To the harp's tune he set his rustic sounds
Which thro' the wood reëchoed theretofore.
  Therefore the winner honors thee, blest son
Of Letò, offering a cicada here,
Moulded in bronze: the singer, on a harp.

Already quoted is the appeal to the swallow. There, too, the chief interest is in the cricket, whose threatened fate

reminds one of Thompson-Seton's dictum, that every animal's life is a struggle that ends in a tragedy, the pursuer becoming always in turn the hunted. There should have been a hawk already "hovering in the sky" above the greedy swallow.

Many more such poems could be cited, but one especially should be offered here, as it returns to the debated subject of the "monuments," built by man, to the lower creatures.

Cricket's Epitaph.

By Leonidas.

If the tomb she for me raises
  Somewhat tiny seems to be,
No less, traveller, be the praises
  Of Philainis sung by thee,
Seeing, I, the tuneful cricket,
  Haunter of the reeds, so long
Dweller in the thorny thicket,
  Making gladness by my song,
Three full years by her was cherished,
  Fed by her from day to day:
Nor when I lamented perished
  Did she cast my love away,
But the memory of my songs
This memorial prolongs.

Remarkably prolonged, too, was the singer's earthly life: three years of captivity after a protracted time of freedom! The reader's credulity as to such monuments must endure, for this *diminuendo* series of honorable sepultures goes a step lower yet,—to the rival of the bee in the favor of the proverb-makers. This memorial may be no more than a barrow or tumulus, of suitable size.

To a Dead Ant.

By Antipater.

To thee, long-suffering toilsome ant,
In thy familiar haunt
Which thou shalt now frequent no more,
Beside the threshing-floor
A mound of thirsty clods shall be
Upraised to cover thee.
Demeter's rows of grain shall wave
Above thy grave.

Even to a yet humbler theme the minstrel descends, though not to promise a memorial stone, nor even to express once more that sympathy with Mother Nature's littlest children which has already proved so remarkable,—nor yet to utter any courteous word at all. The verses deserve fairly high place, elsewhere, for ingenuity in extracting real poetic gold from a most unalluring source.

To a Bookworm.

By Evenus Grammaticus.

Thou whom the Muses most detest,
Devourer of their pages,
Thou thievish devastating pest,
Browsing upon the stolen sweets of ages,
Why, with thy dusky skin,
Lurkest thou here within
The holy records, bookworm, thou who art
Of Envy the fit sign and counterpart?

The gnat may claim the last place, if only because his illustrious poet is here in a still pleasanter and even a humorous vein. His office as messenger is no doubt thrust upon him, on the score of his undoubted power to wake the sleeper, and make himself audible, if not welcome.

Lover's Courier.

By Meleager.

Fly, thou fleet messenger, for me
O gnat, to where Zenophilè
Lies sleeping. Lightly touch her ear,
And murmur softly:
"Wake and hear!
"Thy lover waits: And wilt thou lie
"Oblivious?"—
O Musician, fly!
Speak low, lest thou disturb her mate,
And stir his pangs of jealous hate.
But if thou lead her back to me
A glorious meed awaiteth thee:
A lionskin thou'lt have, to wear,
And stout club in thy hand shalt bear!

The note is indeed so surprisingly cheerful, particularly for Meleager, in a true Erotikon, that we are inclined to condone any other offense, ethical or artistic.

The general impression is unquestionable. The grasshopper and cricket are favorites, with hardly a rival. This will at least strengthen the translator's general contention, that the true Anthology is essentially a rustic nosegay, an idyllic picture of humble life.

IV

FLOWERS

As with the chapter on Kisses, so the easiest hunting-ground in this section would naturally be the Erotica. And, recasting an opening sentence of the Animal-section, be it added, no important botanical data will be divulged! There are, however, a sufficient number of allusions to flowers to excuse an effort to weave a few of them together here.

Of course, we are rarely sure that the identity of name, even of the ever-recurrent rose, indicates at all the same species, or indeed the same genus, that our own memory and love recall. But, after all, the Jacqueminot is fragrant and of few days—and so is the commonest little five-petaled wild blossom beneath our feet. Both are true flowers, at least. (Mr. Kipling's poem, "Flowers," upholds, with might, a similar thesis.

"Weed ye trample under foot floods his heart abrim!")

The chief passage really demanding study, and even research, is Meleager's Proem. It may be thought that the reader should have, duly set before him, the full list of forty-seven poets, and explanations of their flowery designations. In truth, a number of these singers are wholly unrepresented by a single extant line, in the Anthology or elsewhere. Others would be equally in oblivion but for a single commonplace epigram curtly accredited to each. To many, no date, or definite Greek home, can be assigned. It is a case where "a part is more than the whole"; as Hesiod says:—and even the forty-seven were but a part, as the Proem itself declares.

From the Proem of Meleagros.

This garden full of song—to whom, dear Muse,
Offerest thou, or who is it has shaped
The Singer's Wreath?
Meleager fashioned it,
Weaving the gift for noble Diocles
As a memorial.
Many a lily he
Inwove of Anytè, the martagons
Of Moirò, Sappho's few, but roses all,
. . . The fresh vine-blossoms of Simonides,
Nossis' spice-scented flowering iris, too,—
Upon whose tablets Eros melts the wax,
Marjoram of the sweet-breathed Rhianos,
Fresh virgin-tinted crocus of Erinna,
The myrtle-berries of Callimachos
With acrid honey filled,
Bitter as ocean brine, Archilochos'
Flower o' the thorn, outsprung from tangled brakes,
The golden bough
Of Plato evermore divine, that shines
With every excellence; Aratos, too,
Kenner of stars, hath he beside him set,—
—With many fresh-traced leaves of others too.
And with them may abide, of his own Muse,
Some early-blossoming white violets.
To my beloved friends I send the gift:
But yet the sweet-voiced Muses' wreath of flowers
Is shared of right by all initiates.

That Sappho's poems, given in the Anthology or elsewhere known, are "few, but roses all," we regretfully accept. A recent find has materially added to their number, possibly to her fame. Perhaps next in honor is the widely varied "lily," of which at least two distinct species, "*krinon*" and "*leirion*"

(martagon?), were known, and are here used to glorify two women high in the poetic list—Anytè and Moirò.

Meleager not only chooses for himself the modest "white violet," but another evidence of his fondness for it is found in the beautiful tribute to Zenophila in early girlhood,—the fair borderland "Where the brook and river meet,"—beginning

> "Already blooms the violet pale,
> "Narcissus, lover of the vale,
> "Lilies that crown the hills."

For, in Greek utterance, the first word is also the emphatic key-word ("THE WRATH of Peleus' son," "A MAN do thou sing," "HOME of Admetos," etc., etc.), and *Leukoia* (white-violet) is here put first in the Greek verse.

The flower-names narcissus, iris, crocus, hyacinth, daphne, myrtle, lotus, also occur in this Meleagrian Proem, in forms which English retains but little changed. But in some cases we know that the like-named flowers,—ancient and modern,—are as different as British and Yankee mayflowers, daisies, or robins: in other cases we are pretty generally agreed that "we know nothing surely." In very few can we argue intelligently the especial fitness of the flower emblematically assigned to the poet.

It is rather amusing that, in the Proem for the first supplement, Philippos, in a later age, using much the same method, gives us a dozen more such comparisons, and then bids the gentle readers liken his other contributors each "to whatsoever flower or tree they will." One almost suspects an irreverent grin at Meleager's back.

Naturally, as "like to like," or "sweets to the sweet," flowers, especially wreaths, garlands, crowns, are constantly offered to the belovèd, generally also with a reminder of the brief blossoming time of beauty, and the urgent advice to enjoy the May of life.

Brief Bloom.

By Rufinus.

This wreath, O Rhodocleia, to thee I send,
Which with my hands I've woven, dear, for thee.
Here lilies, rose-buds, damp narcissus blend,
Dark violets, and the moist anemone.
My garland don, and put thy pride away:
Thy flowers, and thou, shall bloom but for a day.

But this is perhaps Byzantine lack of gallantry. Seven centuries earlier Meleager is more—tactful, perhaps.

Flos Florum.

By Meleager.

The garland fades on Heliodora's head,
She, flower of flowers, resplendent shines instead.

Still, the prevailing note will always be the other, as in the thrice-familiar

Rose and Thorn.

Anon.

A brief while blooms the rose. If that be sped,
No rose thou findest,—but a thorn instead!

The implicit application to human bloom and decay is of course the only reason for the couplet's existence. But it is also expressed directly, as frankly as in any Shakespearean sonnet.

Unthrift of Beauty.

By Straton.

If beauty fades, share it ere it be fled:
And if it tarries, why, then, dost thou dread
To share what, shared, is yet not forfeited?

Possibly a touch beyond the line of good taste, in this same key, is to be condoned as at worst but a heavy jest, or even squarely defended as a rather shy man's offer of marriage.

Buy My Roses!

By Dionysios.

Is it roses you sell?
You are rosy as well:
  And this I would ask you: whether
You'd barter for pelf
Just a rose, or yourself:
  Or might I have both together?

But there is certainly a very much sweeter and purer bit of verse with which to take thus early leave of roses and posies: ere they fade. Whether the conservatory, or some direct method of hastening the life of the plant, or both inventions together, be here indicated, is poetically a minor question. At any rate, the answer to it is not at hand.

Roses in Winter.

By Crinagoras.

Spring was the season of the rose:
But now our crimson cups unclose
In depth of Winter, as we smile
On thy birthday. A little while
We tarry for thy wedding now.
To crown a bride so fair as thou
Is sweeter far than lingering
To greet the tardy sun of Spring.

Other casual allusions to flowers will occur not rarely. They are of the things essentially unchangeable, that help us realize how little, after all, peaceful rural life can vary, from one age, land, and folk to another.

V

GLIMPSES OF CHILDHOOD

THIS phase of life is not prominent in the literature or plastic art of early Hellas. Even into the arms of the faultless Praxitelean Hermes is laid a small unshapely figure, betraying as blind an ignorance of any living original as one of the saintly Fra Angelico's impossible women. "The Child" indeed, as a lovely and vital stage of individuality, has hardly yet come to his proper heritage, whether in Life or Art. To the Greek he was chiefly an assurance of the family's continuity: so it was preferably men with living sons who were sent on the forlorn hope, or to certain death.

One half-elfish shape, to be sure, rises suddenly to tantalize his grown-up victims, often throughout the Epigrammata, constantly in the first roll, of Erotica, his proper covert: for we speak, of course, of that merciless godling of whom Meleager says, in proud sadness, that

> "He an infant yet, as he lay in the lap of his mother,
> "Gambled away my life."

In these vivid glimpses of Eros is often revealed an artistic acquaintance with the actual children of men. One or two examples may be offered here. Then we will attempt to close the door on Eros, while we gather up the scant sheaf of more realistic sketches.

Eros lost,—and found.
(A Valentine.)

By Meleager.

"Eros, wild Eros is lost!" I cry:
Just now, at early dawn,
Forth from the couch where he did lie
He's flitted, and is gone.

His tears and smiles alike are sweet,
  Of prattling words no lack.
On fluttering wings he speedeth fleet;
  A quiver on his back.
His father's name I cannot tell:
  To all he works annoy,
So that in Heaven, sea, earth as well,
  None owns the saucy boy.
Even now some snare for souls he lays,
  Or plans some mad surprise.
—Aha! I've found his lurking place:
  There in Zenophila's eyes!

In this case the master liked his own general motif so well, or hit the lady's taste so perfectly, that he won a fortunate encore. This time the translator will attempt, in fear, the perilous elegiac three-step, which, in the original, always seems so deceptively easy.

Eros for Sale.

By Meleager.

Let him be sold! Even now, as he sleeps on the breast of his mother.
  Surely! For why should I rear such an unmannerly thing?
Snubnosed he was born, and wing'd. With his nail-tip he scratches.
  Just in the midst of his tears merrily often he laughs.
Stubborn is he no less, sharp-eyed, and ever loquacious:
  Toward his mother herself savage, and not to be tamed.
Every way he's a monster! Ay, sold shall he be. If a trader
  Wishes to buy him a lad, bid him come hither to me.
. . . Tearful he begs!—Ah well, no more am I minded to sell thee.
  Be unafraid!—And abide thou by Zenophilè here.

Probably the entire Anthology besides would offer fewer vivid traits of infancy than this pair of sketches alone.

Despite some daemonic powers of the little winged archer, these seem like clever studies of real babyhood: and the latter one, also, of playful young motherhood hardly less. Much such a sportive treatment of the baby-god by painter or carver is equally familiar: and generally carried out with as little serious ethical aim, or defined religious belief, as here.

We must turn to the relatively rare glimpses of merely human children. Perhaps as well known as any is the pathetic little girl-bride, reluctantly sacrificing her pet playthings to Artemis.

Child Bride.

Anon.

Before her wedding Timaretè,
O Lymnaean Artemis, offers to thee
  The coronal that upheld her tresses,
Her tambourine, her beautiful ball,
And,—a maid to a maid, as is fitting,—all
  Her little doll-maids,—and: the dollies' dresses!

We may fancy it is the same child-wife, or another such, who, not yet much matured at heart, needs consolation in maternity.

Glory of Motherhood.

By Apollonides.

No glory from thy brows is shorn
Since these twin children thou hast borne.
In more eyes thou the sunshine wilt behold,
—And art thyself more perfect than of old.

The mystical beauty of this closest of physical ties, which the frightened little mother seems yet needing to be taught,

is felt exquisitely behind the tender phrasing of a woman's dedicatory poem—on a grape-cluster, which was perhaps actually carven and colored, rather than real.

Mother and Child.

By Moirò.

Abrim with Dionysos' wine
Thou liest, daughter of the vine,
In Aphrodite's golden fane.
Thy mother never may again
A twining tendril 'round thee throw,
Nor bid a nectarous leaf shading thy head to grow.

The writer remembers, at Eleusis especially, little girls of eight or ten, quite able to carry on three employments all together; for they were more or less absorbed in a game like tag or puss-in-the-corner, skipping swiftly from one old carven stone to another, they carried on a decidedly saucy and mischievous railing conversation, in slangy Greek, to, at, or about, the stammering "barbarian stranger,"—and they never ceased meantime spinning thread, holding a simple distaff high in the left hand, and twirling the spindle with the right.

So the combination of her tasks, games, and loquacity emboldens him to set Crethis of old Samos here among the children.

A Lost Leader.

By Kallimachos.

O Samian maids, for Crethis sorrow you,
The story-teller? Many a game she knew,
  And merry pastimes taught,
  Beguiling those who wrought
Their tasks beside her. Now she slumbers deep,
Until we also pass to share her sleep.

Whether the next selection is properly included here depends on the difficult problem: "How old is Pyrrha?" Poetic testimony varies. Whittier's first sweetheart was not much beyond five. Dante at nine gave his heart to Beatrice, a year younger than he. Aldrich's "Lydia is thirteen." A Greek lad might attempt to con the "Works and Days" (*i.e.*, Lucky days for rustic tasks), at either age. But we must fear he is near the perilous outer edge of true boyhood, who begins to "take notice" of the girls.

"Crabbed Age and Youth."

By Marcus Argentarius.

Even as my hand unrolls
One of Hesiod's scrolls,
Lo, sweet Pyrrha drawing nigh!
With the impatient cry
"Why with Tasks annoy me, Ancient, so?"
Down to Earth the scroll I throw.

The next two boys will betray no such weakness for feminine society.

Three tiny poems, all of winning simplicity, occurring together (Anth., VI, 226, 227, 228) in our chief MS., seem like a single leaf preserved by chance from some lost collection of genre sketches, as unpretentious and gracious as "Tanagra figurines." The ox permitted to live out his carefree age, and gaffer Cleiton content in "the cot where he was born" and has spent eighty years,—stand guard on either side the happy boy Proclos, proud of his first silver pen, and of his ability to write with it.

A Boy's Birthday.

By Crinagoras.

Proclos, a silvern gift I send
To mark thy year that comes to end:

A reed-pen, with a cleft horn-tip
That swift across the page will slip.
A trifle,—but with all my heart,
To aid thee in thy new-learn'd art.

In the lack of more distinctly childish material, a poem may also be included here, which gives a glimpse of such a sturdy figure as one of our Boy Scouts, in the happiest moment of his young life. The mention of the boys' "palaestra" (not the "gymnasium") shows that he is by no means a grown-up. In his race he must not only have outrun his rivals, but kept his torch alight.

Boyish Victor.

By Crinagoras.

Winning the foremost place
In the youths' holy race
Memorial of Prometheus' theft of fire,
Antiphanes, son of a likenamed sire,
Dashed from the Stadium into Hermes' porch,
Yet holding the bright torch,
And offered up that sign of victory
To the palaestra's guardian deity.

The figure of young Hermes stood at the entrance of each palaestra, as its divine patron, and doubtless also as an ideal type of physical vigor and beauty. The antics of the baby Hermes himself, during the first twenty-four hours of his life, are told in his "Homeric Hymn," well known through Shelley's free poetic treatment. Unfortunately, none of that myth is available here.

Probably both by the same hand, and, if so, referring, doubtless, in very different tones, to the same incident, are two brief poems, ascribed to Zonas or an equivalent name. One, with rather ghastly realism, tells how the poet's baby

thrall or serf, in the master's house, climbing upon a ladder, fell and broke his neck.

The other, a perfect poem, must have come from a truly fatherly heart, stricken with bitter bereavement, but holding firm to his simple unquestioning faith, even to the grim traditional vision of the Stygian ferry. This is the best assurance one can offer, if it be doubted, that the Greek man and artist can enter into full sympathy, through love, with such helpless innocence as Christianity has enthroned in Madonna's arms.

Appeal to Charon.

By Zonas.

Thou who on the reedy lake
  Toward Hades' shore dost row
The skiff that the dead must take,
We implore thee for the sake
  Of our unmeasur'd woe,
When the child of Kinyras stands
At the ladder, extend thy hands,
O Charon gloomy of face,
And set him in his place.
He slips in the sandal-bands:
And across those pebbly sands,
  Barefoot, he fears to go.

And here we must make an abrupt stop, for which the transcriber has only two excuses to offer. He has nothing of substantial value to add,—and even the best would be an anticlimax, after this resistless appeal to the "ferryman of shadows" (to borrow a phrase from the Alkestis), and to every loving heart. The reader who is unmoved by this miniature masterpiece had best close the book betimes. In all the devious jungle paths of the Anthologia there is no arrow of heartache waiting to smite him. Nor will any Great Adventure cross his way.

VI

KISSING

BEES in a June clover-field? Briny drops in Ocean? Almost like that, indeed, especially if we seek our material, where we chiefly must, in the first roll, the Erotica. Meleager himself, first and best editor of an Anthology,—that is, culler of posies,—can hardly sing save of love and loss and longing, as his own six-score and more contributions fully reveal. In his rather cloying Proem, wherein each contributor is likened to a more or less fragrant flower, shrub, or tree, of five women placed in the first eight, "burning Sappho" is one, and another

> "Nossis
> Upon whose tablets Eros melts the wax."

So we should know what to expect. As the Erotica is finally handed down to us, however, the far coarser Byzantine poets of the latest supplement have the earliest place, with quite too much prominence given, in particular, to Rufinus, the one wilfully indelicate poet, often somewhat in Roman Martial's worst vein. He is generally assigned to the sixth century A. D. A mild example of his too blunt touch appears on a very early page: the first quotable one for our present purposes.

How Europè Kisses.

By Rufinus.

Europè's kiss, tho' with the tip
Of hers she did but graze my lip,
Were sweet.
Ay, but she doth not sip
So coyly. Matching lip to lip
She drains my life from every fingertip.

There was much more delicacy of feeling and expression attained even in that belated sixth century A. D. Another Byzantine, in fact, probably of Rufinus' own day, has declared:

"Sweet is my Sappho's kiss, and warm,"

but adds, half-regretfully, a little later,

"Her soul is pure, calm, white as snow.
"Not past her lips may Eros go:
"All else is virginal, all too well I know!"

On still far loftier levels we presently find Plato's shining name: though others bore it, even in his fourth century B. C., who were better known as poets than ever was the great Plato, the chief of philosophers. Even if this be his voice, we may remember that Agathon, while yet youthful and beautiful, was also the precocious winner of the laurel in a dramatic contest, for which Plato himself might have been in many respects a strong competitor. This, then, may well be such a kiss as the poet-ghosts of the Divine Comedy attempt to bestow on each other: a loyal recognition of kindred greatness.

"At the touching of the Lips."

By Plato.

When Agathon I kiss, with pain
My soul within my lips I keep.
Hither she climbs,—alas, in vain!—
Ever intent across to leap.

Perhaps a still more famous lyric,—some think it the finest in the entire Anthology,—ought to be offered here, as a marginal. As an appeal by a Plato to another beloved youth, it may illuminate the last. Aster is not only a proper name, but an ordinary word for "star." This is a single couplet, whose rhythm we may for once attempt to echo.

Aster.

By Plato.

Aster, my star, at the stars thou gazest. O were I the Heaven,
So with numberless eyes ever to gaze upon thee!

Whether any extant verse is the actual composition of Socrates' great disciple, is a question still debated.—But this is all a digression.

The alliance of Wine and Love is a prehistoric one. A naïve confession of weakness, indeed, by a would-be Stoic, runs thus:

Desperate Odds.

By Rufinus.

Reason my breast-plate is. I am fully armed
To strive with Eros, nor am I alarmed
Lest he may conquer in the duel, tho',
A mortal man, I face the immortal foe.
Yet, if he Bacchus win for his ally,
Against the twain what power, alone, have I?

So it is not a great surprise to come upon a pair of rather coy folk, sitting on either side a loving-cup or statelier carven wine-bowl, across which at least their eyes, and voices, reach and meet.

Lovers' Ferry.

By Agathias.

No eager toper I:
Yet if thou'rt fain to try
My valor, kiss the cup!
Then will I drink it up.
Since thou hast dared to sip,
I, too, set fearless lip.

A wine-bringer like thee
'Twere hard indeed to flee,—
Or sober to abide!
The cup from side to side
Ferries across thy kiss,
  Glad to make known
To me the bliss
  That was its own.

Though the exact adjuration to "leave a kiss within the cup" was borrowed by Scholar Ben more directly from a prose passage in Philostratos, there are other songs in this roll which hover about the same or a similar fancy. Thus the following, in which the translator confesses there is some "lingering sweetness, long drawn out," compared with the briefer original.

Lucky Cup.

By Leontios.

Touch her lips
  While she sips
Out of thee her wine:
  Drain them dry!
  No reproach for thee have I.
'Tis thy treasure-trove, O cup.
Gather every drop of honey up.
  Yet I pray:
  Whether now or on another day,
  Be that task of thine
  Also mine!

The Juliet of the next lyric seems to have had no trellis by which her eager Romeo could clamber nigher. Though the simile of the bursting pipe may not appeal to sentimental readers, yet classical students will recall that Ovid uses it,

long before, in so pathetic a scene as Pyramus' suicide. But it is Byzantine, or Roman, rather than Greek art.

"So Near and Yet So Far."

By Agathias Scholasticus.

Withheld from kissing me,
My glorious Rhodopè,
As if it might atone,
Tost me her virgin zone,
While many a kiss heartfelt
She lavished on that belt!
I, like a stream reversed
In a pipe nigh to burst,
Turning my thoughts away
Had bade my kisses stay.
Now on that zone with zest
Lips nowise mute I prest,
And, though at too long range,
I kist her in exchange.
Not wholly was it vain:
Somewhat assuaged our pain:
A bridge, from each to each
That girdle seemed to reach.

And here again, as in Plato's case, since our subject is hardly one to demand a "continuous performance," we may perhaps turn aside, to glance at a poem which merely throws a questionable side-light on the possible length of this "zone," belt, or girdle. The word in the next citation is not indeed *zoné* at all, but another, usually translated *wimple* or *scarf*, first met, perhaps, as the name for the only apparent garment of the kindly sea-nymph, Leucothea, who sacrifices it to buoy up Odysseus on his two days' swim toward Nausicaa's land, in the Odyssey.

Bride-Gift (and Promise).

By Paulus Silentiarius.

To thee, my bride, I bring
This wimple, glimmering,
Inwrought with golden thread.
Fold it about thy head,
Then close be it around
Thy comely shoulders wound.
Last, as a bodice warm
'Twill cling about thy form,
While to thy faultless breast
The clasp is closely prest. . . .

(The fine matron's headdress, promised after marriage, is of no present interest; at least, to the reader.) But these two authors, as has been seen elsewhere, were intimate personal and poet-friends. The "girdle" of the former poem seems to have been itself some sort of sash or scarf, an article often so worn in the Levant, nowadays at any rate. The scarf (wimple) of this poem may have been lent by Paulus' bride, or just such may have been in general use. It would have been ample for the modest height of a Greek second-story or oriel window.

But this, again, is all a bypath, doubly perilous for the heavy masculine tread.

If Meleager, the master, is to appear here at all—and he certainly should, in every such selection however brief—it must be permitted him to strike a less cheerful note: such as that in his mention of

"kisses . . . by hopeless memory feigned
"On lips that are for others."

"When the rain is on the roof."

By Meleager.

Oh Night! Oh sleepless longing in my breast
For Heliodora! Oh tear-worn eyes that ache
At jealous Dawn! Do relics of her love
For me yet with her linger? Is the kiss
Of memory upon my cold picture warm?
And for her couchmates does she have her tears?
Or does she cherish, clasped against her breast,
So to beguile her soul,—a dream of me?

Even over the loving-cup itself, there is, with Meleager, this same pervasive note of melancholy and languishment, remote from any other poet's tones. Once again, here, let the original rhythm be attempted, in our harsher consonantal modern speech.

"Happy, if only—"

By Meleager.

Sweetly the beaker rejoices, asserting, a darling of Eros,
Even Zenophila's self, toucheth the brim with her lips.
Happy the cup! But I would those lips unto mine she were pressing,
So, not pausing for breath, drinking my soul at a draught!

The last poem here quoted is drawn from the roll of all least pleasing to modern taste. Yet it is one of the most naïve and universal of utterances, while the playful hyperbole of the close almost tempts to vain search for some such remote influence as from Provençal Troubadour, or other courtly minstrel to a chivalric Queen of Beauty. The name, pronounced with changing accent like English Maúrice and French Mauríce, becomes thereby masculine or feminine at the reader's preference.

Katydid, Katydidn't.

By Straton.

Just at the hour of fading light,
When we at parting say "Good Night!",
Moiris,—but if 'twas true or dreamed
I know not,—kist me, so it seemed.
All else I can remember well:
All that we had to ask or tell.
The only point in doubt is this:
Did I, in truth, receive that kiss?
If so uplifted to the gods, why, then,
Should I be wandering here below with men?

—Enough! So say we both, gentlest reader.

The subject hardly demands any formal summing-up, nor does it provide data which might make such an effort particularly instructive. Any remarks, even, on the essential changelessness of human nature would here seem otiose: and indeed, Kipling's Mulvaney, surely no tyro in either art, holds the extreme opposite view, declaring there are "as many ways of making love as of fighting," and, in either, each man finds his own fresh and untried methodology for himself. If so, this is indeed the most unedifying of essays.

VII

EROS

(OR, LOVERS' BLISS AND MISERY)

THE subtitle is the more descriptive. It is quite needless to delineate Eros; though it may be well to mention that in the Hellenic golden or silvern age he is, for poet and sculptor, a tall, fleet stripling, nearer man than babe, whose weapons and marksmanship are impressive as well as fatal. His gradual retrogression, or rather that of his caricature, the Roman Cupid, to a chubby infant barely able to flutter about a valentine, runs parallel with, if it does not illustrate, the general degeneracy of heroic myth, poesy, and plastic art. To no such amusing if perilous *enfant terrible* was the long discussion in the Platonic "Symposium" devoted, nor did Euripides have any petty godling in mind when his tragic chorus sings, in the Hippolytos:

> "Come not prithee, sorrow-laden,
> "Nor too mighty unto me.
> "Neither flaming fire is stronger
> "Nor the splendor of the stars,
> "Than the shaft of Aphrodite,
> "Darted from the hand of Eros,
> "Who is child of Zeus supreme."

Philosopher and dramatist are fairly facing, artists though they both are and must be, the rooted fact, that intersexual passion is lord of life. But in the days when most of these Erotica were composed, the Greek man was aesthetically less lofty, and, in act, hardly heroic at all.

If occasionally a note in these poems seems too ignoble or even coarse, the reader may be assured that severe selection

has rejected tenfold as much, more or less alluring, too, of either tendency. The especial prominence of Meleager here is not to be escaped nor regretted. We may resent, or deplore, certain phases of his art, as much as we do in Catullus', or in Heine's, in Burns', or indeed in Herrick's. But his leadership, like theirs, is undeniable. His actual scope, and even his elemental power as a poet, would be somewhat more fully appreciated, if present taste permitted the faithful rendering of some of his too warmly colored lyrics of passion.

One familiar experience greets us again at the gate: Happiness is by preference mute, though misery be insistently eloquent. There is as a rule merely sunlight, and the fragrance of early blossoms, in the air, when with Hymen all is well: perhaps, also, a laughing murmur, not to be distinctly overheard. (The "Garland" is the constellation that brings fit sailing weather.)

May-time.

By Asclepiades.

Sweet in Summer is snow for the thirsty to drink. For the sailor
After the Winter is past, sweet is the Garland of Spring,
Sweetest of all, when two underneath one mantle are sheltered,
While by the twain at once told is the story of love.

But after all, a mere bolted gate is most discreet.

A Secret.

Anon.

I loved, wooed, won, was loved, and am in bliss.
Who? whom? when? where?—The gods alone know this!

Of course, the love-chase itself is no unmixt misery: nor joy.

"Still she flees and he pursues."

By Paulus Silentiarius.

Tho' farther off than Meroë thy errant feet may fare,
Wing'd Eros lending me his wings shall set me quickly there.
Tho' to the sunrise, ay, the dawn, tinted like thee, thou flee,
All those innumerable miles afoot I'll follow thee.

Whether the pursuit is arduous or easy, winged or slow, is unclear, to the lover's determined but bewildered soul.

Illusions on the way.

By Paulus.

Bit by a mad dog's tooth, 'tis said,
A man in mirroring pools, instead
Of his own face that dog will see.
Now frantic Eros, it must be,
A prey to his daft fancy makes
My spirit; for in placid lakes,
Ay, and in whirling eddies too,
Thy features ever meet my view,
Even in each cup of fiery wine
I quaff, thy face I see, not mine.

No rash promise is to be trusted.

"Varium et Mutabile."

By Paulus.

Cleophantis tarries still!
Thrice my thirsty lamp I fill;
Soon its glow will waste away.
Would the flame I might allay
Blazing ever hotter, higher,
Of my spirit's wild desire.

Oft by Kypris did she swear:
"Yes, at twilight I'll be there."
—None she loves, that traitress maid,
Nor of gods is she afraid!

Jealousy will not leave the lover's heart at peace.

All but perfect.

By Rufinus Domesticus.

All that is thine I love:—except thy vagrant eyes:
For they still pleasure give to men whom I despise.

Even if love is assured, absence, ever so brief, brings its note of distrustful sadness. Our most tranquil philosopher confesses:

"Torments me still the fear that love
"Died in its last expression."

And that note is of course the master's own.

Tears and Flowers.

By Meleager.

Pour, and once and again, and again, cry "Heliodora!"
With the unwatered wine mingle the sweetest of names.
Crown my brows once more with the garland dripping in unguents;
Tho' it be yesterday's wreath, 'tis a memento of her.
Look! For the rose, most precious to lovers, is weeping, to know her
Absent, vanished afar, not in my arms as of old.

And presently, as Collins sang in quite another key, "Revenge impatient rose."

Penance Assured.

By Agathias.

Art thou too distraught, Philinna?
Dost thou waste no less in torture
Tearless-ey'd?—Or dost thou slumber
Reckless, yea unconscious even,
  Of my agonizing pain?
Thou shalt come to know it also.
I shall see thee, wretched maiden,
Drench'd in tears that fall unceasing.
Cypria, so oft malignant,
Hath this virtue, if no other,
—Haughty women she abhors!

For the bitterest depths of real wretchedness, also, we must turn back, as has been intimated, from Byzantium; six hundred years back, to the Syrian harp of the master-player.

Stormy Parting.

By Meleager.

I know! Why then, to me, this bootless oath?
That thou'rt a profligate is plainly told!
Thy spicy-scented fresh-anointed hair;
Thy heavy-drooping eyes that know not sleep;
Nay, look! The very cord that bound the wreath
Upon thy tresses! And those curls, pluck'd at
But now by lawless fingers, are defiled.
The unwatered wine makes all thy limbs to shake.
Begone, thou woman common unto all!
The revelers' harp, the din of hands that clash
The dancers' castanets, are summoning thee.

When all respect is lost, there is but one lower depth to sound. That is reached in the doubt, whether strength of will remains to persist in renunciation. Catullus also strikes this chord.

A Derelict.

By Meleager.

Thou bitter wave of Eros' sea,
Ye wintry deeps of revelry,
Ye gusts of jealousy unslumbering!
Ah whither would ye fling
My soul now rudderless adrift upon the main?
Even ravening Scylla's face shall we behold again?

It is quite impossible to write any inner or outer history of Meleager's life. He may have had one supreme passion and disillusionment, such as would perhaps be inferred from these last utterances, and all his fickleness and dissipation may have come later, in the vain effort to blot out the one unendurable memory. But there is no reason to assign any such tragic prominence to any one of his experiences, nor to credit his life with such a broken unity, even, as that. By his own frequent confession his loves were many, his vows always vehement, his capacity for poetic self-expression on one plane unique. If modern parallels were ever aught but misleading, one would be tempted to compare his career to the life of a Byron, recorded in verse more akin to Swinburne's. There is one poem, expressing hopelessness of a different type from the last two, with which we may take a kindlier leave of him, for the present.

Pagan Bereavement.

By Meleager.

My tears, O Heliodora there below,
I send thro' earth to Hades as my gift;
Tears shed in bitter memory of our love.
Upon thy oft-lamented tomb I pour,
—Love's offering,—my libation of desire.
Pitiful, pitiful lament I make,
I, Meleager, for the well-belov'd,

Even among the dead: an empty boon
To Acheron.
Alas! Where is the flower
For which I long? Hades hath seized, hath seized
And dust defiled, the perfect blossom.
Earth,
Mother, the nurse of all, I beg of thee
Clasp gently to thy breast her whom we mourn.

There is really here no higher art, because no higher feeling, no consolation, no foreshadowing of reunion, no hint of belief that there is any conscious life at all, beyond the parting. We hear only

"the ploughshare of sorrow
"Tear down to the primitive rock,"

—or to the weaker foundations of an unheroic soul,—and feel that we are interlopers, to whom the entrance-gate should not have been flung open at all.

Doubtless it is at this point that Eros requires some such transformation as is accorded him by Marianus in a poem elsewhere cited, such that he can "Conduct the soul to Heaven on high." But it seems more than doubtful whether that rather allegorical and impersonal Eros has anything to do with the gods of Olympus or true Hellenism at all. His appears rather the tone of Paul, and John, and their Master. If so, we are quite over the border, where Faith, Love, Hope, and Charity guard the gates of the New Jerusalem, as the verses themselves seem to intimate. The true Eros is the most merciless Pagan of all.

VIII

MINIATURES OF WOMEN

IN his vivid account of the mediaeval Latin students' songs, John Addington Symonds insists that the women whose charms are so frankly praised in those rollicking lyrics are of the humblest social class: or of none. The same assertion is often heard concerning the loves—fickle light-o'-loves in many cases—immortalized in the popular Erotica of decadent Hellas. But here, at least, there are shining exceptions. And what is more vital, some of the most artistic, as well as most passionate, of these utterances are so elementally human, that they make appeal equally to any time, any land: and to any social station, if that be worth adding. When, indeed, was the permanent value of a picture or statue ever determined by the supposed character or social status of the model?

A handful of such typical sketches are here redrawn in English lines. The faithfulness attempted is rather to the spirit than to the form. Indeed, the originals are nearly all cast in the elegiac couplet, a measure which is rarely assayed, and yet more rarely attained, by English versifiers. Perhaps the attempt may be made to illustrate it in rendering the briefest poem of Meleager, editor and star contributor to the first edition of the Anthology, and one of the sweetest, saddest minstrels of sensuous passion in any tongue. Short as it is, it sums up

A Life Story.

By Meleager.

Eros, an infant yet, as he lay on the lap of his mother,
Gambled away my life, playing with dice at the dawn.

But ever since Chaucer, rhyme has come to be more and more nearly compulsory in an English love-lyric, original or translated.

In any such selection as this, the voice of Meleager himself must be heard first, and last. He may be writing of a child, or at least, as Longfellow puts it, of

> "A thin slip of a girl like a new moon
> "Sure to be rounded into beauty soon"

in the verses

The Maid Is Fairer Far.

By Meleager.

Already blooms the violet pale,
Narcissus in the watery vale,
  Lilies that crown the hills.
Now too Zenophilè, sweet rose
Resistless, as each lover knows,
  To her bright blossoming fills.
Why do ye laugh, ye meadows pied,
In the vain glory of your pride?
  The maid is fairer far
  Than fragrant garlands are!

On the other hand, Melitè ("Honey") might be a grandmother: indeed, a quite up-to-date twentieth-century grandmamma: or possibly Barrie's mother, sketched in verse by R. L. S.

Ever Youthful.

By Agathias Scholasticus.

To slender Melitè tho' near
And nearer with each circling year
Old age approaches, Youth's soft grace
Hath never faded from her face,

Where oft the color mantles high;
Allurement dances in her eye;
And often still in her appears
The wilfulness of childish years.
For Nature's force,—we've learned this truth,—
Unvanquish'd bides, in age or youth.

There are less respectful Melitè poems, by several hands; but even in this, no stroke should be credited to any chivalric courtesy toward womanhood or age. Such courtly reverence the Greek, of any period, has hardly known. There are indeed descriptions of woman's old age so realistic, and so brutal, as to be hardly quotable. Rather let us set here the record of mild justice meted out by Time to a famous, even notorious, beauty.

Laïs Grown Old.

By Plato ("not the philosopher").

I, Laïs, who laughed over Hellas exultant,
Whose porches were packed with the swarm of my suitors,
At Paphia's altar now offer my mirror:
For that which I am I endure not to look on,
And cannot on that which I was!

An austerer quatrain (in the original a couplet) may have been suggested by precisely the same incident: if it is indeed a real occurrence.

"The Sere, the Yellow Leaf."

By Secundus.

Laïs, whose beauty, once, a rankling dart
Lingered in each man's heart,
Not Laïs, now, but Nemesis appears
Of the fast-gliding years.

The next selection illustrates in somewhat cruder form this same lack of true chivalric sentiment, which has just been emphasized. The lover is quite puffed up at his own magnanimity in condoning so grave a blemish! Of course, any gallant minstrel of Western Europe since the Troubadours could have mentioned the telltale tress only to glorify it as a final and irresistible charm.

Nevertheless.

By Rufinus.

Her cheek is crystal-clear, golden her eyes.
Even as a crimson flower her mouth is sweet.
In ivory carved her breasts and neck uprise:
More silvery white than Thetis' gleam her feet.
Tho' mid her locks one wisp of grey appear,
For that grey wisp I'll count her not less dear!

Sometimes this self-satisfaction on the lover's part is carried to a point where it betrays his own deficient sense of humor, while we are filled with vigorous contempt for him. Thus in

"But Mine Own."

By Philodemos.

Philainion's short, and swarthy, I confess.
But: curlier than parsley is each tress,
Alluring more than Aphrodite's zone
Her prattle: everything that is her own
She freely offers, no return will claim.
Surely I'll keep her for my constant flame:
—At least, until I find a yet more perfect dame!

When we come to a purely artistic motif, such as the double charm of beauty plucking at the harpstrings, we can trust ourselves fully to the Hellene's art and feeling. We hardly need be told this is again the master's voice.

Zenophila Playing.

By Meleager.

With harmonies thy cithara rings:
Deft is thy touch upon its strings:
And whither, O Zenophilè,
Ah, whither should I fly from thee?
Eroses all about me crowd
So not a breath am I allowed
To draw with freedom! For thy grace,
Thy music, or thy perfect face,—
All these assail me turn by turn,
Till, frantic, as with fire I burn.

Six or at most eight lines is the Greek ideal for the "Epigram." Within such brief compass, one may hardly expect to find any elaboration of outline, or even any contradictory traits. Yet that too is occasionally illustrated. The name of the beloved, whether real or fictitious, does not necessarily indicate a resemblance to the poetess. This sketch is in fact sixth-century Byzantine, so twelve centuries after the Lesbian's day.

"Not Passion's Slave."

By Paulus Silentiarius.

Sweet is my Sappho's kiss, and warm:
Softly about me folds each arm,
Snow-white,—but not snow-cold,—full oft.
Yea, all her dainty frame is soft.
—Her soul is pure, calm, white as snow.
Not past her lips may Eros go:
All else is virginal, too well I know.

Perhaps by this time a serious-minded reader may be ready to demand one glimpse at least of unquestionable social respectability. Here it is, then! The lady is beyond

reach of cavil or doubt, even if the distinguished authorship claimed by the little poem is not. Perhaps, indeed, a certain serene self-satisfaction may be a bit too much in evidence.

At Aphrodite's Shrine.

By Theocritus (?).

This goddess is the Uranian,
And not the vulgar Cyprian one.
To thee the chaste Chrysogonè,
Iphicles' wife, does homage. She
Bore to him children, shared his life,
While every year for man and wife
Was happier than the last.
Oh Queen,
Thy loyal subjects have they been
From the first hour. They who the gods adore
Shall from them in return have blessings evermore.

Clearly, the heavenly Aphrodite, so emphatically differentiated from the vulgar Pandemos, is simply a type and personification of Love itself, indeed of conjugal bliss. The poem illustrates a very wide truth: that simple, strong natures, perfectly content with their lot, accept uncritically and unquestioningly so much of the orthodox theology of their day and generation as does not jar upon them—seeing and hearing little of the rest. They are cordially thankful to the Powers that cast their lines in pleasant places. Other men may fix the form of rites, even name the Higher Ones, as they will. Many such another prosperous satisfied matron, beneath the glow of a stained-glass window, while the organ peals to lead the congregational singing, is today putting all her heart into some strain like

"Love Divine, all love excelling."

There is one large question as to Greek plastic art, which must be regarded as settled, scientifically, but yet our feelings and sympathies remain curiously divided. It is the employment of color, more or less realistic, upon the marble statue. The notion that the Greek taste ever preferred dazzling white, or cold neutral greys, except for effective contrasts, is quite belated. And yet, studying a present-day Madonna or saint of colored plaster in a shop window, or even a dainty majolica masterpiece of Della Robbia's school, one feels that the (now uncolored) Melian Aphrodite or Praxitelean Hermes soars above them like Olympus over Tanagra!

The truth is, doubtless, somewhere between. Despite a dozen poems of the Anthology itself, the illusion of actual breathing life, or exact imitation at all, is never a proper aim of plastic art. A statue is an avowed idealization, and therefore uplifted on a pedestal, and properly of heroic size. Yet one can hardly doubt that Phidias, and his successors, in some way united sculpture statelier than Michael Angelo's with a feeling for color as adequate as Venice ever knew. The poem here cited may fairly be brought to bear on the archaeological question. Melitè's glowing charms are pushed into direct rivalry with the masterpieces of Attic sculpture.

This may very well be again the same Melitè whose roguish eyes so long held Agathias to his allegiance. He and Rufinus are probably of the same Byzantine group that laboriously, and for the last time, revived this form of poetic art.

Melitè the Adorable.

By Rufinus.

Where is Praxiteles? And where are now
The hands of Polycleitos, to endow
The shape they fashion with a living breath?
Who now in wax or marble rendereth

Melitè's glowing eyes, each fragrant tress,
And her white neck's resplendent stateliness?
A sanctuary should this beauty hold,
Even as the shape of some blest god of old!

The plastic imitation, which the poet-lover would call up the supreme masters to fashion for him, would, evidently, be one that, as these errant poetic art-critics too often say, should lack only breath and speech, and might even be mistaken for life itself. This is not, to be sure, a sculptor's ideal, but it certainly points to something very different from cold white marble alone.

The last lyric to be here quoted, which, as was said, can only be one of Meleager's, may at first seem out of place here, as the girl's charms are not described, nor even directly asserted. But neither is Homer's Helen described as she arrives at the Scaean gate. Only, the old men, bereft, hopeless, weary of the ten years' beleaguerment, murmur in their grizzled beards—no reproach for her sin, but—a compliment!

Truly no marvel it seems, if, for such a woman as she is,
Trojans and mailèd Achaians for long years suffer in sorrow.

So, with an art no less perfect in its kind, the bee, favored messenger of Hamadryads and gentle Nature-powers generally, forgets the beauty, the fragrance, the precious golden pollen, of the rose—for my lady's more roseate cheek. Furthermore, in its hint of "Bitter-sweet," the little poem utters a truth that every still-baffled artist, as well as every short-lived mortal lover, knows too well.

Agro-dolce.

By Meleager.

Oh flower-fed bee, why dost thou seek
To brush my Heliodora's cheek,

Leaving for her the blossoms of the Spring?
Wilt thou reveal to us that Eros' sting
  Hath ever for the heart no less
  Of unendurable distress
  Than honied happiness?
'Tis that, I doubt not, thou wouldst have us know.
Speed back, thou lovers' friend. Long, long ago
We learned, it must be so.

If these ancient lovers, and we, can draw such sweetness even from their sorrow's root, does it matter so much (what we, in most cases, can never know) whether this particular attachment, or that, was pure, devoted on both sides, or conventionally permitted? In the eternal temple of Art, these, like the far more heroic shapes, the Hectors and Andromaches, as well as the Paolos and Francescas,

"Are but ministers of Love,
"And feed his holy flame."

IX

TRUE LOVE

A BIT of fugitive verse, cataloguing in *diminuendo* the seven notes of this octave, begins with

> "The love that seeks for no return,
> "Love that for answering love must yearn" . . .

The supreme passion, whose "holy flame" all the others feed, may easily rise, anywhere, to the latter level, at least. Anything approaching the former, *e.g.*, pure parental devotion, is more arduous. In this wilderness of song it is sometimes glimpsed, perhaps as pure and as potent as elsewhere. That thesis will here be briefly illustrated, at most, not argued. There is no cogency of arrangement. In fact, the two oftenest-quoted and perhaps clearest utterances will be offered first, and then a handful believed to be not unworthy to stand beside them.

In the least alluring section of the great Corpus is found

A Life Together.

By Straton.

If we spend together
  All the allotted time,
Which shall question whether
  Either pass the prime?
  If my love of yesterday
  Bide with me and bide for aye,
  Shall we love the less today?
If we bide thro' joy and sorrow
Shall our love be less tomorrow?

The next poem, a simple epitaph, wins a word of rare praise even from the Greek scoliast: "Worthy of wonderment."

Oblivisci Nequeo.

Anon.

Sabinus, at thy grave I set
  This stone, memorial for thee,
Whom I thro' life shall not forget.
  If 'tis permitted so to be,
Forbear to drink at Lethe's brink
  Forgetfulness of me.

Lowell, in his tribute to Emerson, says something to the effect that Youth needs the bugle's blast to arouse it, "careless what breath may fill it." So, at any age, there are clear calls, sometimes articulate, or perhaps

"Only a flashing sunbeam
  "In at the window-pane,
"Or Music pours on mortals
  "Its beautiful disdain."

They seem inspired, because they answer the imperious instant need of the heart. Often a poem that has served such a need remains always a favorite, even though we cannot, or would not, explain why.

The translator has studied often and long an unpretentious poem, not even admitted by Mr. Mackail to the aristocracy of his five hundred. It seems, to him, to contain implicitly the whole spirit of glad, devoted, humble, loving service: and, also, a lofty cheer for men conscious of failing powers, but as yet

"not quite
"Cut off from labor by the fading light."

Perhaps the Greek view of Bacchus, and his gift (to whose inspiration tragedy, comedy, all lofty imaginative utterance, were largely ascribed) is already hard for us to understand, and to our grandchildren may be altogether anathema! But the real appeal, through all the poets' analogies and images, however humble or lofty, is always, of course, to human hearts alone.

"The Night is not yet come."

By Philippos.

An Adrian jar am I.
Here emptied and broken I lie.
Yet once a honey-sweet note
Had the gurgling voice in my throat.
I forget not, within me of yore
Dionysos' blessing I bore,
Even the gladdening wine.
Now, I hold but the new-budded vine
That beside the light trellis is set.
But I serve the Bromian yet:
Once of his age was I ward,
And now, 'tis his childhood I guard.

It has been suggested elsewhere that many a prayer and offering, even at Aphrodite's shrine, may have been made in as pure and devotional a spirit—of aspiration toward Love Divine as the source of the heart's purest earthly affections —as is found today at any wayside shrine or in any fashionable church-pew. A simple example will illustrate this claim once more.

A Thankful Heart.

By Agathias.

Paphia, Callirrhoè
Offers these wreaths to thee,

To Pallas brings a tress,
To Artemis her zone,
In thanks for happiness:—
A youthtime undefiled,
A lover all her own,
—And now, her first-born child.

The single clear note of gratitude seems to go heavenward as swift as the Lost Chord of Barry Cornwall's short-lived child. Though two virgins, Athenè and Artemis, are included, it is an Aphrodite who is given precedence of them, and is directly addressed. Her worthiness is to be judged only by Callirrhoè's soul, in which she is conceived: for thus do we make unto ourselves gods in our own spiritual likeness.

Very striking are the confident appeals, in hundreds of epitaphs, to the sympathy of every passing stranger. Once, at least, the fellow-feeling even of the shades in the lower world is graphically imagined.

Welcomed in Hades.

By Antipater.

When Charon's skiff brought thee across, to land,
O Aretimias, on Cocytus' strand,
Holding in arms the babe that with thee died,
Fair Dorian dames throughout the kingdom wide
Of Pluto came in pity to thy side
As the news spread: and thou to them didst say,
While down thy cheeks the tears yet found their way,
"Two children to my husband thus bereft
"I bore. Lo, one! And one with him I left."

There are few more vivid glimpses of a heartbroken survivor's agony than this:

All too Lifelike.

By Julianus.

The artist sets Theodotè
  Before us as in life: and yet,
Would he had failed, so suffering me,
  Who loved her, to forget.

In the stately grief of Plato for his still beloved Aster appears a metaphor, used to assert his immortality. This figure has, it would seem, been remembered by Tennyson, while he too was bowed down by a like loss, and so reappears in a canto of In Memoriam.

"Phosphor-Hesper."

By Plato.

Thou, Aster, didst as Phosphor once among the living glow:
As Hesper thou dost glimmer now amid the dead below.

One high pure type and expression of love is a grateful devotion, as the former protector in turn becomes helpless and in need of what he once freely gave. When a mere fancied image of that gratitude is vividly personified, and set forth in tender verse, it is, surely, clear, that poet and listeners, both, have hearts well acquent with generous, unselfish love and devoted gratitude alike.

Not Friendless Age.

By Antipater.

Over me, the withered plane,
Blooms the Bacchic vine again,
Covering me until I shine
With a glory noway mine.
Yet did I, so naked now,
Once with many a leafy bough

Shelter all her clusters red.
Well may I be comforted,
Who, when mine own foliage long has perished,
Am by such a loved companion cherished!

Even in love-poetry in the ordinary sense, which has its rightful place in the Erotica, are found some strains free from over-sensuous imagery, and almost spiritualized by their pure intensity, like a Romeo's or an Olivia's passion.

"Such Sweet Sorrow."

By Paulus Silentiarius.

"Farewell!" when I would say,
Still ere I turn away
My voice I check, and bide
Yet longer at thy side.
I from this parting shrink
As from the fearful brink
Of Acheron!
Like the day
Art thou to me!—Yet, nay,
Dumb is the day, tho' bright:
Thy utterance brings delight
As if the Sirens sang.
And thereon all her hopes my soul doth hang.

And the master has uttered a no less Shakesperean hyperbole.

Chiaro Scuro.

By Meleager.

If but clouded thy brow, then is it the Winter I gaze on:
Blithe are thy glances again? Fresh is the blossoming May!

This is but a chance handful of flowers, gathered at the wayside after most of the more brilliant blossoms had been culled for use elsewhere. Indeed, under Childhood, Womanhood, Common Things, the tale can be easily duplicated. But to gentle hearts conviction will have come with ease already.

X

OLD AGE

PERHAPS the most notable difference between the Greek view of age and ours is the lack of anything that could be called reverence, or even marked deference. The unchivalric attitude toward women has been noted elsewhere. In the poets' dealings, even with them, old age seems to make little difference. The stern denunciation of a Laïs, indeed, as the "Nemesis of ill-spent years," is no doubt defensible: but even good old women win no pedestal or dais.

The pair of poems next to be quoted are both amusing, in a fashion, but it is not possible to give to either the hearty sympathy their authors seem to have counted on. An heroic knight, a troubadour, even a gentleman, could not have composed either.

An Unwelcome Duenna.

By Agathias.

Lingering out her wretched days
By spying on our words and ways,
That crone, whose life is thrice as long
As is the crow's, has done us wrong.
Not even gold her heart can charm,
Nor strongest liquor work her harm!
If our two glances wandering meet,
—Oh, the audacity!—the sweet
Fair face of my poor weeping maid
Resounds with rude slaps on it laid
By those rough hands.
Persephone!
Was e'er Adonis dear to thee,

So pity thou our miseries,
That she upon us lavishes.
One boon we crave: Let maid and crone
Be parted. Else can blood alone
For our accumulated wrongs atone.

The other poem, scurrilous to age and womanhood, sins grievously against the rule of charity toward the departed, also. One is tempted to raise here, once more, the doubt, which is so often justifiable, whether woman and monument may not be alike imaginary. But no man can decide that.

"Even in our Ashes."

By Antipater.

This monument to Maronis is set up,—
A drunkard crone. See, carved in stone, the cup.
Garrulous lover of the unmixt wine,
Parting with son or sire she'll not repine,
But that yon Bacchic cup, with Bacchic juice
Well-filled, upon her tomb is set,—not for her use!

Wine for women, wine unmixt for any, was usually to be disapproved. But still a *man,* whose manner of death would be with us fitly a village scandal, is most apologetically treated, by comparison.

Two Gods Invincible.

By Dionysios.

Drenched with the Bacchic juice
And by the rain of Zeus,
What marvel is't to tell
If, so, I slipt and fell?—
That, sure, was desperate odds;
One mortal man against two Blessed Gods.

But it is high time to turn toward more respectful sketches of Age.

Two old men, both treated at some length, bear the same unusual name. The gardener Amyntichos is mentioned elsewhere. The fisherman seems far less in love with his life-task, or, perhaps, with life itself.

Amyntichos the Fisherman.

By Macedonius.

Amyntichos, an aged fisher, wound
His leaden-weighted nets around
His tritoothed fishing-spear, and bound
Them fast. Then to the briny swelling sea,
And to Poseidon, thus spake he,
While from beneath his lids a teardrop rolled:
"That I am all outworn is known to Thee.
"Tho' I grow old
"And wretched, Poverty, that keeps her hold
"And wastes the limbs, is ever young!
Sustain
"My needy age, while breath shall yet remain,
"Even as thou wilt. But be it on the land,
"Thou who hast sea and earth alike at thy command!"

Quite the same view, as to the choice of elements, is taken in the next poem, which has hardly a touch of any peculiarly Greek coloring.

"Beatus ille."

By Antipater.

The husbandman Archippos, ere at last
From wasting illness Hades-ward he passed,
Said:
"Sons, win your subsistence with the plough,
"And be ye faithful to the hoe, as now.

"Praise not the grievous tasks on treacherous seas,
"And hardship upon perilous voyages,
"As mother sweeter than stepmother is,
"So, than the barren billowy sea far more
"To be desired the fields upon the restful shore."

This has a sound as if agriculture were growing unpopular, and the cry of "Back to the land!" were raised in its aid, as when Virgil at courtly bidding composed the *Georgica*.

There is one glimpse of querulous age in which the professional Hellenist must take a special interest, though he can hardly approve its tone. The mosaic of Homeric quotations and allusions, of which it is partly constructed, will be easily recognized.

The Unpensioned Professor.

By Palladas.

For me no less, Achilles' wrath has proved
"The source of countless ills;" for poor am I,
Thro' love of liberal studies.
Would his wrath
Had slain me, with the Danai, before
This dire scholastic hunger be my death!
But—so that Agamemnon might of old
Bear off Briseis, and Paris, Helen, I
Am fallen into utter beggary!

In proper respect for the teacher-guild, it is necessary to set beside this learned specialist a fellow-craftsman of much humbler rank, but more contented,—or thriftier,—or is he only more of a Stoic? There is no hint of complaint, no prayer for more, so the dedication is a pure thank-offering at the close of a busy career.

Schoolmaster's Valedictory.

By Phanias.

The staff that helped him on his way,
The ferule that beside him lay
Wherewith boys' silly heads to tap,
His skull-cap, slippers, leathern strap,
And circle,—emblems of his trade,
Callon the teacher here has laid,
An offering in Lord Hermes' fane,
Now that his powers are on the wane.

The half-dozen elderly folk here sketched would surely make a motley group, each rather disdainful of nearly all the rest. Their number may easily be doubled by reference to other sections; but even these may suffice to indicate, that old people receive, in the little world of the Anthology, no more respect or consideration than they deserve. There is a double meaning in the rather curt reminder quoted elsewhere:

"Boast not of Time, once sped, Gaffer, as thine:
"Thou hast no ownership in 'Auld lang syne.' "

On the other hand, surely we may ascribe merely to a single embittered or graceless stripling this slanderous sentiment:

"Crabbed Age."

Anon.

Quickly the scant lees sour, when all but emptied a wine-jar.
So with the lees of a life: choleric ever the old!

XI

NEMESIS IN HUMBLE LIFE

THIS title perhaps demands a word of explanation. Nemesis never really became, to the Greek consciousness, fully an individual, any more than Peace, or Justice: much less, for instance, than Hebè (Youth) or Iris (the rainbow). She is always more than half an abstraction, and, also, somewhat like Emerson's Compensation, a sort of variable but real factor in all human lives. The view of life she represents, thoroughly Greek, and also in some degree universal, was accentuated mightily by Aeschylos, whose austere and rather gloomy moral philosophy gives him an imperial influence on all aftertime, somewhat akin to Dante's.

It is in his hands that "tragedy," the merry goat-dance and satyr-chorus of Thespis' day, takes for its chief theme the inexorable justice of the Fates, for whom Zeus is usually a willing and pliable executive. (The world war through which his generation passed explains much of the change in the drama, and in Athenian feeling, as a result of the life-and-death struggles, against desperate odds, with the Persians.) Furthermore, emphasis is hardly ever laid, by Aeschylos,—as it is at the close of the book of Job, of "As You Like It," or, to some extent, even of "Winter's Tale"—on the abundant recompense of the good, the thousand-fold, here or in the Hereafter. The sinful pride and aggression of Xerxes, rather than the successful heroism of Hellas' defenders, is the one proper subject,—if any,—from the life of the passing day, however eventful. "But it *is* only tragic from the Persian side," one says? Yes, "tragic," in the sense Aeschylos gave to that word, which a generation before only meant "goatish"!

Presumption, transgression, impiety, is to be atoned for "even unto the third generation,"—a doctrine, indeed, which doubtless aided the acceptance of the Aeschylean trilogy as the normal form for serious drama. Sophocles, we are told, broke up the inner unity of the trilogy, though he could not escape from the form, and certainly he greatly softened the doctrine of the hereditary ancestral curse, which often, again, bewilders Euripides by its flagrant injustice, as, *e.g.*, to an Orestes or an Hippolytos.

In its extreme form, then, the belief is rather Aeschylean than racial, though doubtless, in a degree, as old and as wide as human experience. All moralities teach, that essential justice comes at last in some fashion. "Niver without payin'! An that's thrue too!" concedes the mercurial Mulvaney, with a deep-drawn sigh. "Pride goeth before a fall." We ourselves still knock on wood, though we have forgotten the Anglo-Saxon for "Nicht berufen" ("You weren't summoned") which a German murmurs. We do not even know we are rebuffing the watchful tree-spirit, who is ever ready to take charge of punishing the boaster. A casual remark of genial ever hopeful Colonel Higginson has always been treasured in memory: "By and large, in the long run, we get about what we deserve: but almost never in just the form, nor at the time, nor from the direction we expect it."

It is little more than this faith,—with a rather livelier sense than ours of the divine jealousy toward unbroken prosperity, like Polycrates', and of Fortune's mad caprice generally,—that lingers in later Hellas. A few typical examples, not of the highest poetic dignity on the average, are to be quoted here. Naturally, they approach rather closely and often to the tang of the modern epigram. They require hardly any comment, and do not blend into any complete or consistent moral teaching.

It may be a trifling contribution to comparative folklore,

to note, first of all, that the tree itself (alluded to above in Teutonic superstition) in the Greek lyrics, also, repeatedly appeals to Nemesis. For example:

Fate Twice Tempted.

Anon.

Till rainy Notus wrenched me from my hold,
I grew, a stately pine, upon the height.
Men grant no respite to the over-bold:
Now, a tall ship, again the winds I fight.

As constantly happens, in the Jungle, another hand attempts to better the shot: and, in this case, with the success that justifies plagiarism.

Twice Doomed.

Anon.

Why, witless builder, dost thou fashion me,
Victim of winds already, a hapless tree,
Into a vessel, overseas to steer?
Of evil omen hast thou, pray, no fear?
Since Boreas overthrew me on the land,
His blasts upon the billows how may I withstand?

Nemesis is not always vengeful. By pious reverence for duty even the grimmest omen may be made a happy one.

Good Fisherman's Luck.

By Carpyllides.

Casting for fish upon the strand
He drew,—a fleshless skull to land.
Pitying the disembodied dead
He digged a grave for that poor head,
—And struck a hidden treasure.
True
It is, that merit findeth still her due.

The hare, leaping into the sea when pursued by the hounds, only to perish yet more wretchedly in the jaws of the dog-fish, is a pitied victim of fate unavoidable. Man's lot is much the same, with the added bitterness of hope, success, and swift reverse.

Sore Beset.

By Antipater.

When off Penéus' mouth his vessel sank,
Antheus was floated on a little plank.
A timberwolf sprang on him at the strand!
Ye, waves, were not so treacherous as the land.

Here the apparent caprice of Destiny is alone emphasized. The man's desert, for good or ill, is not indicated. The next time, the same epigrammatist may emphasize that, instead.

Justice on the High Seas.

By Antipater.

When once at sea a vessel sank
Two struggled for a single plank.
Antagoras smote his friend. With life
In peril, who could blame the strife?
Yet Justice did not turn aside.
He in the jaws of dogfish died:
Pisistratos swam to the strand.
On watery seas as on the land,
The All-avenger of the Fates
Unslumbering awaits.

Whether the very name of Nemesis came to the Greek mind here as the "Avenger," the translator does not know.

Undue risk, undertaken for petty gain, is felt to be a sinful indifference to the divine gift of life. All ordinary precau-

tions may be taken, and still man perishes, unlamented, through what seems his trustiest safeguard. By the way, this poem does not raise the rather low estimate set by Greek poets elsewhere on the intelligence and devotion of the dog. Perhaps there is no minor subject on which "East and West" are farther apart.

Two Honeyseekers.

By Antiphilos.

Down a precipitous descent
Rashly the cowherd Borchos went,
Leaving his rope securely bound,
In quest of honey.
But his hound,
Following, the trail of sweetness found,
And, gnawing broke the slender cord.
So down to Hades fell his lord!
The sweets, to which he earned his right
So dear, were left for other men's delight.

Sometimes, when the poet is most at ease in self-praise, one sees the threat in the sky behind him. All he says may be true, but another hand could have written it, more safely for him,—on his headstone! Even the haughty Douglas remembered that "My castle is my King's alone." And that "real" property, passing from one short-lived holder to another, is in truth "Destiny's alone," is impressively taught, by a wiser mortal, in the Anthology itself.

In Mine Own House.

By Macedonius.

From loftiest turret to foundation-stone
This house was raised by righteousness alone:
For Macedonius with despoiling sword
Reft not from other men their toil-won hoard,

Nor yet did any laborer on his land
Claim his just wage, and grieve with empty hand.
—Rest after effort is assured the just:
And good men's work endures when they are dust.

But the site of that goodly habitation is ages ago forgot.

A voice of warning, like the Virgilian Polites', may come from the grave itself, to enforce the eternal fitness of things. One is reminded of the little fenced hillock on many an upstate farm in New York, doubtless the world over also, preserved through successive changes of ownership. This is one of Nemesis' warning voices.

"Iam Parce Sepulto."

By Isidoros.

A tomb this hillock! Stop thine oxen there!
Never across me shalt thou push the share.
Into such dust and ashes it is meet
That tears be dropt,—but not the seed of wheat.

There is another little poem of somewhat kindred theme, that might be cited under "Humor," or "Poetic use of humble materials," but it certainly suggests also Time's whirligig and its revenges,—or one of Emerson's least poetic or optimistic verses:—

"Things are in the saddle,
"And ride mankind."

Master and Slave.

By Philippos of Thessaly.

Demeter's bounteous gift no more
I grind for mortals, as of yore.

While yet the miller lived, his slave
Still toiling round and round I went.
Now am I set upon his grave,
Emblem alike and monument.
His task-master, in truth, was I,
—And on his bones now heavy lie!

It seems a mere whimsical caprice of fortune, when the treasure found makes one man abjure self-murder, but, also, leaves behind him the means and suggestion for the suicide of the loser.

Good and Ill.

By Plato (?).

The man that luckily the gold doth find
Thoughtless his halter drops and leaves behind:
But he that finds no more the gold he left
With that same halter hath himself of life bereft.

It is true, that only the sudden reversal interests the present teller. But he is at worst unmoral, not immoral. The character and deserts of the two, the final doom of the survivor, are noway indicated. The first man may have won the booty by murder,—or the second may have found it a curse. Here the real Nemesis is off-stage altogether. (Compare Kipling's tale of "The King's Ankus.")

The sudden fall from prosperity may be depicted on such a humble scale that it may leave merely a sense of indignant pity: but there is one law for all: the law of uncertainty and of change. Besides, this *was* prosperity, even wealth, by Socrates' definition: for all needs were met, with perhaps a frugal surplus: a milch cow would provide for a larger family than one. Perhaps Aristides was "puffed up."

Wealth in Poverty.

By Antipater.

One sheep, one cow, not more,
Was Aristides' store,
Yet famine shunned his door.
—Wolves bore his sheep away:
And on that very day
Birth-pangs the cow did slay.
So, before midnight, hung
By his old wallet strap, among
His single pear-tree's boughs he swung!

The name of the great Athenian, Aristides "the Just," exiled by vote of those annoyed at his notorious uprightness, may be the author's quiet protest against what seemed, to him, like mere divine jealousy and injustice.

Perhaps the commonest surprise of Destiny is the arrival of misfortune just when or where man feels most secure: as to Agamemnon at his pompous and triumphant home-coming.

Peril in Port.

By Antipater.

("To sink at last beside the harbor bar."
—Dante in the Commedia.)

His tiny ship securely bore
Nisaean Damis to the shore
Of Pelops, thro' Ionian seas,
Tho' beating surge and adverse breeze
Had forced him from his course afar.
But when across the harbor bar
With passengers and freight he'd passed,
And made his little vessel fast,

Riding on rocky anchorage,
—The skipper, in enfeebled age,
Beneath a furious blast of snow
Must perish wretchedly: and tho'
Others he landed safe, to Lethe's port shall go.

The last antithesis wakes a mighty echo: "He saved others."

On the whole, the prevailing tone seems one of gentle submission to the inscrutable will of Destiny, or, it may even be, of fickle Fortune, with little questioning or protest. And in the bare incident the artist sees and seizes his opportunity. It is a poem, a picture, not a sermon nor even a warning: unless "Such is life" be itself a warning.

We have no right to say Nemesis' act is indefensible. Rather, her righteousness, or right to be, is so unquestioned, that no defense, no explanation even of her, is in order. Perhaps as modern a treatment of the pathetic human side of this problem as it is desirable to mention here may be found in Thackeray's "The End of the Play."

The title of this essay should be accepted as an entirety. This is a very slight study of the Nemesis of the common people (Nemesis "Pandemos," as it were) and of her alone. Aeschylos, Pindar, Plato, breathe a loftier ether altogether.

Even in the Anthology, however, there is at least one poem in which Nemesis is lofty, divine, mystical,—though hardly cryptic even there, for the perfect fitness of her action to her essential nature is entirely clear. Perhaps this is the place to set it, to define the present discussion, so to speak, from the outside. Though Nemesis is expressly mentioned, the lofty philosophic quality of the thought would put the poem elsewhere.

There is one merciless torturer on whom Heaven and

Earth together gladly call vengeance down. Avowedly the work of Nemesis herself, as divine artist, is the shape of Anteros, type and antitype of Love the Archer.

Penalties Deserved.

Anon.

Facing, with wings, the wingèd Eros, stands
An Eros, from the hands
Of Nemesis, opposing bow to bow,
So he may feel the woe
He worked for others. He, that was so bold,
Who knew not fear, of old,
Now humbly Fortune's aid implores, with tears.
True marvel this appears!
Fire shall be now consumed by fire in turn:
Eros doth Eros burn.

(Accurate scholars will not pardon the translator's cowardice, who for mere petty aesthetic reasons blenched from telling truthfully just *how* Eros makes his mute appeal to Tyche: *ter in sinum suum inspuit.*)

Though this last poem is necessary, as the consummation and type of Nemesis triumphant even over the universal tyrant of Earth and Olympus,—yet there is little of Nature in it, and quite too much of curious Art. It is fully time to turn from the simple life to discuss the more conscious artistic use of the traditional literary forms,—which hereafter is rather our theme.

XII

POETIC TREATMENT OF COMMON THINGS

THIS, and the following sections, will deal relatively less with nature, more with art. At present, the translator's wish is to emphasize the ingenuity—or perhaps, rather, the absolute fitness and inevitableness—with which the Greek artist-soul instantly sees, even in the humblest and most commonplace objects, their poetic content: by which is meant, of course, an actual analogy between them and some truth much more lofty than they, of real value to the life of the human spirit. But the truth must be picturesquely realized, not preached.

Possibly the best example of all, to the writer's mind, is quoted elsewhere: the broken wine jar, pressed into the earth as a protection about a tiny grape-vine that is just rising above ground. Nothing could be more prosaic than a broken pot:—until the poet touches it.

So again, any traveler, passing through a village, might see a gaffer, past eighty, at the door of the cot where he was born; a little lad elated over his first silver pen; and a toil-worn ox luxuriating in clover. Even a Thoreau would hardly jot these down in his journal: certainly, not in verse. Yet, on a single page of the Anthology, the golden light of human sympathy plays over these three in swift succession. "Some day that which is now life shall be poetry," says Emerson. Perhaps there had already been such a time. But the truth of the general thesis may be tested by fresh examples.

A reed, for instance, "shaken by the wind," or even a reed-pen duly trimmed and split, is a commonplace object, surely, to the average eye. What says the epigrammatist?

The Reed's Apotheosis.

Anon.

Grape-clusters for the vine,
  Apples upon the tree,
But no such pride was mine:
  Useless I seemed to be.
  —Man found me a nobler fate:
Of highest Helicon
  Made me initiate.
    From off my riven lip
He bade the dark rill run:
    When that black draught I sip,
I, tho' I yet am dumb,
So eloquent become,
All wisdom seemeth mine.
How should I more repine?

What, save the hackneyed antithesis of pen and sword, has the whole modern world to set above or beside this?

But the poem was innate in the subject? It is a mere "find," not a real invention? Let us try something avowedly trifling, even jesting cleverness.

An idler, off the World's bustling highways, his heart confessedly set on garlands, the dance, stargazing, and the tinkling lutestrings, has learned, perhaps in the company of some prattling, teasing Jessica in the summer garden, the names of at least two constellations. Only to a whimsical and idling genius would it occur to build, on so slender a basis, a smiling defense of such indefensible shortcomings.

Harp and Crown.

By Marcus Argentarius.

For me 'tis wild delight
At coming of the night

To watch the dance on high
Of stars across the sky.
—On earthly dances, too, I have not frowned.
With petal-dropping flowers my brows are crowned.
My hands, true liegemen of the Muse,
Never the lyre refuse.
And thus I live as Heaven's own laws require:
—For Heaven itself lacks not the *Crown,* and *Lyre!*

He has won more than a tolerant smile. We suspect that an unforgettable strain may be heard from such a harp, and his crown may be deathless laurel.

On the other hand the nymph Echo, pining away, for love, to a mere responsive voice, may long since have seemed an outworn and hackneyed tale. A touch of simple directness, another of controversial wit, and she lives again.

Echo's Apologia.

By Archias, or *Parmenio.*

"Pass in wise silence garrulous Echo by!"
—Nay, truly, not so garrulous am I.
For I repeat but that which I have heard:
Then, I make answer with thy very word.
If thou art silent, I too give no sign
Of life. What tongue more righteous, then, than mine?

More nearly prosaic is the simple truth about a pear-tree. Yet it has the fragrance of the orchard, and of sincerity. No mere gardener ever wrote the like, nor knew his hands had worked

A Miracle.

By Palladas.

A pleasant task for me
Was offered by the wild pear-tree.

Beneath the bark, when with the sap 'twas wet,
In summer-time, a living twig I set:
And, thro' the cut, that shoot
Struck in the wood a root.
Tho' yet a wild stock, on its boughs it bears
The luscious pears!

From the orchard it is but a step to the vineyard. On the ground lies a bunch of unripe grapes, rashly plucked and cast aside scarce tasted. A Greek could not but see the tragic poem in that.

The serious indignation of his soul gave to it a form which seems destined to be more and more remote from twentieth-century feeling, in Hesperia, as to wine. But the worship of Dionysos, his chief gift to man, and the dramatic masterpieces that graced his festivals only, will always be a very large part of the Attic chapter, at least, in any history of literature or culture.

Green Grapes.

Anon.

What man hath hacked off from the leafy vine
The half-ripe cluster, filled with Bacchus' wine,
And then, his lips a-pucker, flung it by,
Half-devoured, refuse on the path to lie
Of the next-comers?
Now may Bacchus be
Savage to him as to Lycurgus! He
Hath wilfully destroyed ere it was grown
The enjoyment that another might have known.
This draught had quickened men to gladdening song,
Or brought relief, perchance, from sense of bitter wrong.

There is a tinge of scholarly feeling in the mention of Lycurgus, one of the conservatives who vainly opposed the triumphant progress of the Dionysiac cult.

There is hardly a real "temperance" plea to be found in the Anthology, but at least one warning, though uttered in rollicking contentment, of the shortening of life by intoxicants.

Highroad to Hades.

By Antipater.

The wise astrologers say, my life is brief.
Of course, Seleucus; but that brings no grief.
To Hades there is one descent for all.
If mine be swift, earlier I'll pay my call
On Minos. For that highway
A galloping steed is wine: slow footfolk take the byway!

On the same perilous subject there is a pair of poems, as to whose vulgar associations there will be all too general agreement: for, however shapely or decorative the jar thus addressed may have been, it is all too clearly but an early prototype of the notorious

"Little Brown Jug!"

Anon.

Fair-rounded as a sphere,
Long-necked, with single ear,
High throat, and narrow vent
Yet truly eloquent,
O little jar, pray why
When soberest am I
So full of wine art thou?
Drunk, surely am I now,
In thee there's not a sip.
That sins against good revelers' comradeship!

The other poem will also illustrate, once again, how one poet constantly takes a subject and main suggestion from

another. In this case the plagiarist strikes a higher note, of real affection. Some of the lines might find place in a love-lyric. But ethically he does not rise at all.

The Empty Jug.

By Marcus Argentarius.

Thou boon-companion of my pleasures,
Who hast kissed too often the tapster's measures,
Yet in my poverty wert sharer,
Still gladly of thy gift the bearer,
Garrulous one, of genial laughter,
Sweet-lipped, long-throated, long-lost,—after
Absence full long to me restored,
Would, virginal unto thy lord,
Unspoiled, inviolate, unbereft
Of thy most priceless riches, thou wert left!

But it is more than time to turn away from a perilous theme, and perhaps it is fitting to seek a saner tribute to a nobler liquid for our next illustration. Though we may always doubt just how it was meant, it is pleasant, and only just to the Greeks, to remember that their loftiest lyrist begins his foremost and noblest extant flight with the words, "Best is water!" (Pindar, Olympian Odes, I, vs. 1). But the present example is a very long drop from Pindar's eagle-flight. It is hardly credible that the supreme Plato turned to verse for such a homely purpose.

A Thank-offering.

By Plato (?).

The servant of the Nymphs, lover of rain,
That hath his joy in shallow pools,—this frog,—
A wayfarer has shaped in bronze, and made
His thankful votive offering, since he quenched,

In the fierce Summer heat, a hateful thirst.
For to the wanderer 'twas a frog revealed
The longed-for water, by a timely note
Of his amphibious mouth, from the damp glen.
Following that guiding voice, the traveler
Found the sweet spring that was his heart's desire.

One cannot but hesitate, however, at such a drinking-place. It is to a more alluring water-source that Lord Hermes calls the pilgrim as he passes.

Divine Hospitality.

By Anytè.

Here by the windswept close I, Hermes, stand,
At the crossroads, nigh to the grey sea-strand.
A wayside rest for wearied men is here.
The spring pours out its waters cold and clear.

(That quatrain is added chiefly for "good measure," and to escape the deadly suspicion of partiality to the draught that not quenches but excites thirst.)

The general thesis—the ability even of the village versifier to discover a poetic fancy almost wherever his glance fell—is perhaps sufficiently exemplified here and otherwhere. Indeed, the whole of the next section is a continued illustration.

It is, possibly, the most serious handicap of English as a world-language, that it is so reluctant in the verse-maker's hands, because so poor in rhymes: the endless variety of terminations having left, for the average available end-word, only one, or two! That would not be so vital, if our lyric tradition had not submitted itself so long and so meekly to the tyranny of this same "end-rhyme." One result is, that the great majority of intelligent people would exclaim:

"Why! I never made a verse in my life, and I never could!" Probably in ancient Greek, certainly in melodious rhyme-burdened Italian, that assertion itself was, or is, impossible: for verses make themselves, constantly, by chance! And even conscious effort, at real versifying, should be at least as common as dancing and singing, both so close akin to poetry. In our throats are finer musical instruments than the nightingales': why is not all our utterance melodious? Though the name of "vers libre" often seems but a cover for license, gibberish, or nonsense, yet English poetic forms should be devised, so flexible that any poetic idea can be expressed fittingly and adequately in them.

XIII

POETIC VALUE OF MYTH

PROBABLY a fifth- or sixth-century A. D. school of versifiers, in Christianized Hellas, had little more aesthetic belief, even, in the truth and value of the old marvelous tales of the pagan gods than have the literary artists of today. Nevertheless, there are at least two vital differences.

Even these latest decadent Greeks had no other large conscious past behind them; only the older Hellenism. And also, they were still actually surrounded with its architecture, statuary, paintings, minor plastic creations, and, in large measure, with its social usages, political traditions—and, finally, its cult-forms, even though rechristened into the service of the younger creed. However Hellenism languished, it remained all-pervasive still, and unrivaled, unless by the far more ascetic new faith of Christianity.

To take the most obvious illustration in contrast. The very name of Longfellow may indeed, eventually, bring up Pandora, Prometheus, and a few other Greek names or figures: but first there troop in Nokomis and Hiawatha, French Gabriel and Evangeline, Olaf of Scandinavia and Sicilian Robert, Benvenuto Cellini and Michael Angelo, sour-faced Puritans, mediaeval nuns and monks,—even the characters of the Divine Tragedy. Each of these, and of a hundred other folk, brings into our minds much of his or her own native environment, local color, habits of thought: so manifold are our impressions of the past. In somewhat less world-wide extent and variety, the same is true if we open the volume of Tennyson, Alfred Noyes, even of a semi-Hellene like John Keats, or Walter Savage Landor himself.

But, for the Greeks, the scene hardly shifted outside the Aegean, which is properly a Hellenic lake today, and has been their true home for three thousand years. If Herodotus, the wise traveler, recognized the Oriental strain in myth, cult, or morals, it was about as cordially disapproved by him as was Lydian Croesus' or Persian Cyrus' usurped overlordship among Hellenes. The pomp and pride of Xerxes was emphasized, indeed immensely exaggerated, without doubt, by Greek chroniclers and poets: but only to exalt to the skies the Greeks' decisive triumph over him. In their own world, much as with ancient Jewry or modern China, there were only "the chosen people," and—"barbarians": outsiders. Even now, a Frenchman or Englishman is commonly said by the Greeks to come "out of Europe," to Athens. They count themselves neither Europeans nor Asiatics.

From this far too sonorous exordium, let a very modest conclusion be drawn: A sympathetic insight into the spirit of the Greeks' myths, as of their religion, art, politics, social life, will often enlighten the reader as to allusions in the popular poetry of their decadence: and he will rarely need to remind himself of anything farther afield. Incidentally he will have acquired the key to numberless words, phrases, and familiar allusions in every modern literature as well.

A few examples are gathered here. Far more will be easily noted elsewhere. In these few pages no close connection or cumulative argument is attempted: only a wayside gleaning. Indeed, a little sheaf from the oft-quoted Erotica, alone, may sufficiently exploit the title.

A lover, for example, the world over, will always declare his beloved incomparable,—and proceed to compare her with all he remembers, or imagines of

> "Beauty making beautiful old rhyme,
> "In praise of ladies fair"—

But on Greek soil the scale of comparison will be always much the same Hellenic one: the "old rhyme" will be, even, quite as often Homeric as any later less stately verse.

Derkylis Divine.

Anon.

Four are the Graces, the Paphians twain, and ten are the Muses:
Muse, Grace, Paphian too, Derkylis counts with them all.

Yet it is somewhat perilous thus to set at Aphrodite's side any ordinary human being, as her rival. A princess like Nausicaa may perchance approach the chief Olympians in grace and charm: but her noble handmaids, sleeping on guard at her chamber door, are merely

"with beauty endowed by the Graces."

So the more prudent master-singer makes the lesser claim.

"All else shall be forgot."

By Meleager.

I say, that prattling Heliodora's grace
Shall outlast, and from memory efface,
In far-off years and races,
The very Graces.

Even the bliss of lovers may have one divine and sympathetic witness: and she is not simply "the moon," but a gracious divinity, still mindful of her own like experiences.

To Selenè.

By Philodemos.

Two-horned Selenè, queen of night,
Friend to the revelers' delight

That till the dawn shall have no end,
Still thro' our fine-meshed lattice send
Thy sifting beams. Unenvious gaze
On lovers and on lovers' ways:
Thy soul, as well, Endymion set of old ablaze.

Often, as we read, a fair-shaped medallion, with relief figures in onyx, or the like, comes vividly to the mind, but we are left uncertain which work of art, poem or carving, may have suggested the other.

Psychè and Eros.

By Meleager.

If as Psyche flits thy flame above
Thou too often sear her, savage Love,
She'll escape thee, even now:
She has wings as well as thou!

Or again, a graceful couplet hints the great curve of Time itself thus:

Requital.

By Meleager.

Hail, O Phosphor, herald of morn: and quickly returning
Bring thou, as Hesper, the maid now thou art leading away.

The Adonis-cult, with some Oriental extravagance, lamented in autumn, and joyously welcomed back in spring, this personal embodiment of Nature's vitality, in the vegetable world especially. It is cited here merely as the occasion, or excuse, for a lover's rash declaration of readiness to die if only his love would mourn for him.

Rash Pledge.

By Dioscorides.

O Adonis, Aristonoè to the soul
Smote me, as she lamented at thy tomb;
If she would pay me, dead, such tearful dole,
Full eagerly I'd rush to share thy doom!

That a lover's pains and worries may make him forgetful of all physical perils or hardships, is a familiar truth, and a prosaic one. The natural Greek utterance of it uses almost inevitably personal terms, even though these may have become almost as clearly a mere expression of blind force in nature, as when Horace uses "Sub Jove frigido" for "in the open." Indeed, the French, *il pluit,* has hardly changed, in fifty generations, from *ille <deus> pluit* (He, the god yonder, is sending rains). Yet if the phrase be little more poetic, the scene thus becomes altogether more vivid and full of motion through "personification."

Lover's Endurance.

Anon.

Smite me with fire, O Zeus, or snow,
Or lightnings. If it please thee so,
Drive me unto the gorge's brink,
Amid the billows let me sink.
One so by Eros overborne,
In desperate weariness forlorn,
Thou canst not utterly lay low
With seas or lightning, flame or snow.

Occasionally there appear clear traces of familiarity with Homer's scenes, perhaps at first hand. One of Homeric Zeus' most unseemly quarrels with Dame Hera was still not quite without excuse, since she had bribed and aided the

Slumber-god, Hypnos, to overpower him at his outlook on Mount Ida, and then, while Zeus slept, she had turned the tide of battle in the Trojan plain quite against his known desires and plans. Naturally, the reminiscence is used here by Meleager in a less lofty environment.

"My Lady Sleeps."

By Meleager.

Sweet flower Zenophilè,
Has Slumber mastered thee?
Would wingless Sleep were I,
Upon those lids to lie
So close, not he who cast
Upon the eyes of Zeus
His drowsy magic juice
Had power to touch thee: I alone would hold thee fast!

Still more surprised would the poet of the Odyssey be, when a lover once varies the oft-repeated complaint—somewhat like Juliet's—of Lucifer's too swift coming, by declaring that

"A loyal liegeman of Eros
"Ought to be granted a night such as Kimmeria knows."

The Homeric passage probably alluded to here is a very brief episode of Odysseus' related adventures in the outer seas: a glimpse of the misty far-off Kimmerian land, where the sun set not nor rose, and so "a sleepless man could earn a double wage." It looks like some Hellenic Ancient Mariner's unscientific allusion to the long Arctic day, which he might have beheld, on some such seaward venture as Othere's, at the North Cape.

Occasionally, there is no doubt, the poets approach the

great gods themselves by no means in reverent frame of mind. Most of all, naturally, is their bold resentment occasionally expressed against the two most ruthless of all archers, Aphrodite and her boy. The tone is clearly one of familiar banter.

Unlike Mother and Child.

By Meleager.

Dread is Lord Eros, dread! And yet, what profits it the more,
If once again and yet again I tell it o'er and o'er?
For verily with joyous heart, and moved to mirth, the child
Hears himself so unceasingly and bitterly reviled.
He feasts upon my railing words.—Yet marvel 'tis to me,
Oh Kypris, who didst come to us from out the grey-dark sea,
That such a firebrand as thy boy was ever born: of thee!

So much for the Erotica.

But quite apart from lovers' inspirations, any chance roadside incident or picture may suggest mythic interpretation. Thus if the vine, liegeman of Bromian Bacchus, instead of protecting the leafless plane-tree, entwines and seems about to throttle the living olive, the protest is uttered, by a nameless poet, in the victim's name, thus:

Athenè and Bacchus.

Anon.

I am Pallas' sacred olive: wilt thou choke me, Bromian vine?
Take thy brimming clusters from me: I a virgin, quaff not wine.

An art-critic varies the usual hackneyed praise of a statue as deceptively lifelike, to say, more epigrammatically, of

Praxiteles' Niobè.

Anon.

The gods transformed me into stone: and then
Praxiteles gave life to me again.

This stately figure of grief, Niobè, is mentioned in the Iliad, as is also a gigantic image of her, a freak of nature, helped out by man, which is still to be seen, in the mountains near ancient Ephesus.

Many other illustrations of this general theme will be easily discovered. The emphasis is here laid on the fact, that these mythic figures are always near and familiar to the Greek mind, just as their plastic shapes stood forth in almost any rural landscape or city street. They are an essential part of the stage-setting for the long life-drama of the Hellenes: and a decadent age still uses them freely, to illustrate their own unheroic themes or homely fancies.

XIV

DEDICATIONS

FROM various sources, apart from the Anthology, we have occasional graphic glimpses of the "cluttered up" condition inside many a popular Greek temple. Thus Aesculapius' worshipers were in constant peril, from the falling of waxen or more weighty facsimiles of human limbs, etc., hung there in gratitude for miraculous cures through faith and prayer. Numerous examples of poems referring to such offerings are utilized elsewhere in this volume—but quite an aftermath may also be best brought together here under their proper rubric.

An oft-recurrent and generally unsettled question is: Was the actual object named really dedicated to the god? Or, if a copy, how reduced in size, and of what material? Of course, in Aesculapius' case, originals were "unavailable."

Lovers of Catullus will remember his beloved yacht, laboriously worked up the Po and the Mincio to gusty Benacus (Lago di Garda) and there dedicated, when his wanderings end,

"To thee, twin Castor, and to Castor's twin,"

favorite patrons of seafaring folk. Even after this circumstantial account, wise commentators insist that only a little model was presented to the shrine. A close parallel is offered here.

"We will not wander more."

By Macedonius.

Sovran of seas and monarch of the land,
To thee my ship, I, Crantas, dedicate,
Wave-drench'd no more, tho' feather-tost of late

By winds wide-wandering, till on Hades' sand
I thought to drive! So from the sea, today,
Its gusts, its hopes, its fears I turn away,
And grateful plant my feet upon the firm-set strand.

Many an aging fisherman offers in tedious iteration much the same array of his rude and outworn gear. One will suffice, besides Amyntichos' elsewhere given rather dolorous utterance.

Fisherman's Farewell.

By Julian the Egyptian.

Baeton to Hermes offers here,
  Dreading the helplessness of age,
The implements of many a year:
  His anchor, flintstone, trapping-cage,
The net, corks, fish-hooks, reeds,—and oar
Whereat he toils not any more.

The "reeds" may stand, roughly, for our boyhood's coveted bamboo pole, while the "cage" suggests the general construction of a lobster-pot. The pole was perhaps used for a short cast, but nothing is heard of a reel, or indeed of any sportsmanlike playing of the fish.

Often, again, a modest share of a lucky catch, or of its proceeds, will be offered; of course in lively hope of still greater future favor.

Trawlers' Thank offering.

By Maecius.

Priapus, warden of the strand,
The trawlers, for thy helping hand
Offer thee gifts, who, 'mid the brine,
In the green channels of the sea

Snared with their nets of braided twine
A tunny shoal.
We bring to thee
A cup of glass to hold thy wine,
And heather-woven home-made seat,
Whereon to rest thy dance-worn feet.

Those feet were of Pan's cloven pattern, and so easily wearied in the dance:—unless, indeed, this be read as a perilous allusion to the still commoner type of Priapus-busts mounted on a square pillar, like the Hermae, for which any mention of dancing, or of feet at all, would be bitterest mockery.

It is only by chance that the waters and the seaside have thus far been prominent. The farmer is also often in evidence.

Sometimes a new local shrine is itself the thank offering.

To the West Wind.

By Bacchylides.

This rustic shrine for Zephyrus,
Of all the gods most bounteous,
Eudemos builds within his field,
Because the helpful wind-god hears
His prayer, and grants an early yield
Of winnowed grain from ripened ears.

The purely private nature of this consecrated spot may permit the surmise, that it constituted, or included, some exedra, arbor, or other shelter, not altogether useless to the owner-worshipers in the midday heat. At any rate, a similar thrift, or repugnance to needless waste, gives to another pious bit of verse a turn which even the poet may have known to be semi-humorous.

Not Wholly Sacrificed.

By Leonidas.

To the Satyrs, drinkers of must, and Bacchus, who planted the vine,
Fresh from his presses Heronax offers the foaming wine.
First unto thee, ruddy Bacchus, and next, O Satyrs, to you
Freely we pour libation, with all ceremonial due.
This is the crown of our vintage: three jars, three vineyards' best:
—So now yet deeper than Satyrs we'll quaff, for ourselves, of the rest!

Of course the soldier's trophy holds an honored place.

Victor's Shield.

By Mnesalcas.

From ranks of war and strife afar I tarry here at rest,
Who with my brazen back so oft kept safe my master's breast.
Tho' far-sent arrows, javelins, and stones were showered on me,
Yet, upon Cleitas' stout forearm, never I turned to flee!

When an aging fisherman, a scrivener, a schoolmaster, a mechanic or a farmer, dedicates the tools of his trade, it is difficult to take the statement other than literally. Over the offering of, *e.g.*, a giant cuttlefish or "scolopendra," a young man's first beard, a bunch of grapes or other first-fruits, or even of the original bridal gown of Omphalè when she wedded Heracles, etc., etc., all sorts of archaeological or practical discussions may arise. But perhaps as curiously interesting as any is the very humble offering of a returned wanderer.

Relic of Travel.

By Antiphilos.

O Artemis, warden of the ways,
Antiphilos on thine altar lays

This hat from off his own dear head,
Proof of the long road he has sped.
Holy, tho' humble, is the pledge.
Remembering then, that sacrilege
(However small the theft) is yet
Perilous, greedy traveler, let
Thy hand not snatch what here I set.

The passage might be cited to show that hats, if not yachts, were really deposited at the shrines *in propria persona,* as it were. Indeed, aside from the insistence on its small value, the worn and weatherbeaten condition of the souvenir seems essential to its worth, as evidence of the journey itself.

But why was it a fitting object for consecration, and to be regarded as particularly holy? The transcriber can only suggest that the expedition was itself in the interest of the god or his temple, or perhaps was something like a pious pilgrimage to a remote shrine. In that last case, we could compare the palm or cockleshell that vouched for the Palmer returning from Palestine. Antiphilos may have been not only poet, traveler, and donor, but, as general benefactor, or as temple-attendant, so well-known that no explanation was needed:—at least, there, and then: the tantalizing effect on the ignorant aftertime is rarely considered.

"This and no more shall ye know": not even whether any stiff-necked Low Churchman complained, as in tyrant Gessler's doubtful day: "Soll ich mich denn verbeugen vor'nem *Hut?*"

The Pantheon takes in a wide range of character and cult. Perhaps that of Priapus, not remote from Aphroditè Pandemos, is as hard as any to accept as divine in any sense. Yet the usage of dedication, or at least poetic exploitation of it, extends even so far. This picture is not lacking in lawless charm.

Fleeting Memorial.

Anon.

The ivy wreaths that breathe of myrrh,
The girdle that encircled her,
And saffron, now the festive night
Is spent, Alexò, as is right,
Offers to thee in sacrifice,
Priapus of the leering eyes.

These "leering eyes" are often in evidence, because his statue, or, often, as was noted before, a mere bust on a rectangular pillar, was set up—partly to frighten thieves or thievish birds—in gardens, where his eyes might often turn ascant, not in disapproval, to spy on rites he could not stir to share.

At the beginning of this paper the disorderly condition, at least of certain too-popular temples, was remarked. Certainly one poem gives also a broad hint of the din and confusion, such that Zeus himself might find it useless to try to speak or listen. The familiar use of Homer's word, "Scheria," indicates that later ages still accepted the claim of Corcyra—as Thucydides seems to do—to identity with the goodly Homeric land of the fabled Phaeacians, masters of magical seacraft that obeyed their every thought, like Hiawatha's canoe. As a landing point for many merchant ships, Corcyra (Corfù) might well be full of noisy sailors anxious and clamorous for assurance of safety on their next voyage.

Exile's Prayer.

By Julius Polyaenus.

If the affrighted cries of men who pray
And thanks of those whose prayers have not been vain
Fill with their myriad din thine ears alway,
O Zeus, that guardest Scheria's holy plain,

Yet hearken to me also. Nod assent
As thine assurance that my banishment
Is done, and I at home may end my days,
Released from wandering far-off alien ways.

Nearly every other chapter can be drawn on for further examples of real or imagined dedications. Our knowledge of the old life is supplemented and enriched at numberless points also by the actual inscriptions, still recovered every year by excavations. That, however, is a subject only an archaeologist, or indeed a professed epigraphist, can treat with full knowledge, and lies quite outside our gates. Professor Mackail includes a few such authentic inscriptions, unknown to the MS. Corpus Epigrammatum.

XV

EPITAPHS

IN discussing a collection "inscriptional" in name and perhaps in its prevailing character, and with one large section devoted exclusively to epitaphs proper, this might seem a leading subject. But even in the special book of Epitaphia many poems are of essentially diverse character, some of them purely imaginative, others almost lampoons on the real or supposed departed.

Not a few real or possible inscriptions upon tombs, again, have been already used elsewhere in this volume. The present section alone, however, will offer sufficient material for a favorable comparison with modern collections of real or fictitious poems on life ended.

The mere tomb, as has been already illustrated elsewhere, may not indicate any deaths at all.

Forethought for all.

By Paulus Silentiarius.

In general foreknowledge of the doom
That waits for all men, drawing yet his breath
Atticus builds with cheerful heart this tomb,
Fearlessly jesting with the dread of death.
I pray he yet may tarry many a year,
The sun of wisdom, in the sunshine here.

Or it may be a cenotaph in a sadder sense.

Message Home.

By Asclepiades.

Thou who dost stride my empty barrow by,
When thou art come to Chios, traveler, tell

My father, Melesagoras, that I
Of merchandise, of ship, of life as well
By evil Eurus have been quite bereft.
Naught of Euippos save the name is left.

The pathos of such a fate is brought out more powerfully in a simpler note, with less thought of the individual in it.

Lost at Sea.

By Glaucos.

Not dust nor stone's light weight, but every wave
Thou gazest on is Erasippos' grave.
He perished with his vessel: somewhere rot
His bones, yet only sea-gulls know the spot.

In general, the sea plays a large part in these tragedies, and we are often reminded of a vivid chapter in "Captains Courageous," where the list of lost fishermen of the year is read out. The brevity is often supreme art.

Better fortune!

Anon.

Ask not, O pilgrim, whose this grave may be,
But win thou happier fortune on the sea.

And again:

Loneliness.

By Theon of Alexandria.

The halcyons above the wave
  Keen their laments for thee.
A mother's tears upon thy grave
  Are falling silently.

Peaceful Slumber.

By Callimachos.

Here Saon, Dicon's son, the Acanthian, lies
In holy sleep. Say not the good man dies.

Ares' Caprice.

Anon.

Valiant Democritos hath here a grave:
Oft Ares spares the coward, not the brave.

These show that not only Laconian brevity could dictate such inspirations as the famous

"Tell at Sparta, passerby,
"Here, at her command, we lie."

(This too has been taken up, perhaps at a very late date, into the Anthology.)

One statelier record on the grave of heroes bears a doubly fitting signature.

"Dead on the Field of Honor."

By Aeschylos.

Guarding their land, the nurse of plenteous flocks,
These men, who steadfast stood amid the shocks
Of crashing spears, black Doom hath prostrated.
But still their glory lives, if they be dead,
Their limbs in dust of Ossa garmented.

There are on the other hand some curiously ignoble voices, which may be uttering hostile slanders on the dead. This is the confident materialist who speaks, apparently.

Laissez faire.

Anon.

World, for all me, now I am dead,
Sink to the fires below.
I shall not be discomfited:
All's well with me, I know.

But the Agnostic assures us, far more solemnly, that "No one knows."

Whence and Whither?

By Macedonius.

O Queen of birth,
And thou, O Earth,
—One lights us to the day,
One hideth us away,—
My race is run. Farewell to Thee, and Thee.
Whither I go
I may not know,
Nor ever knew
Whence, whose, or who
Hither I came, to be.

There is a single word of cheery content, perhaps really by the great artist's hand.

Quite Suited.

By Simonides.

Not Croesus', but a toiler's little tomb
Thou seest: and, for me, sufficient room.

There is discontent rather with life than with death in the tone of

The Pessimist.

Anon.

Dionysius of Tarsus am I
Who here at sixty lie.
I wedded not in my life.
Would my father had taken no wife!

The question whether a different career might have granted a longer and happier life may be raised.

Sorte male contentus.

By Crinagoras.

Would, lucky shepherd, that I too
Had led the flocks afield, like you,
Had taught the bleating sheep and lambs
To trail behind the leader rams,
Nor ever dipt the steering oar
In brine, departing from the shore
To where blast-driven billows swallowed me,
Later to toss me lifeless shoreward from the sea.

But the general impression is that nothing would have availed to escape Destiny.

One Goal.

By Plato (?).

A shipwrecked sailor's tomb am I;
Next me a husbandman doth lie.
Beneath the billowy sea or solid ground
Hades' dominion stretches without bound.

And again.

One Route.

Anon.

Straight is the downward journey, tho' it be
From Athens we descend, or Meroë.
If far from home I perished, make no moan.
One breeze blows fair for Hades, one alone.

There are often among the Epitaphia poems merely addressed to the departed, like the famous one of Callimachos to his brother-poet, translated elsewhere.

Another equally vain prophecy of after-fame by bard to bard might be a warning to all the long line in which the present scribe is "ultimus minimusque":

To the forgotten Editor of a lost Anthology.

By Julianus.

Thy veritable monument, Theodore,
Is not thy tombstone, but the goodly store
  Of rolls, upon whose myriad pages
Thou rescuest the bards of other ages,
  Giving them life again,
Whom Lethe already numbered with her slain.

Also, in the same roll, may occur a mere genre picture. In the instance next offered, the rather mixed scenery—snow-storm, lightning, grazing cattle—prevents any painful sense of realism, to say the least.

Dead Shepherd.

Author Uncertain.

A snow-storm from the mountain-side
Drove the slow kine at eventide,
Without Therimachos their guide,

Homeward unto the byre.
The faithful herdsman: where is he?
Under an ancient ilex-tree
In the long slumber lieth he,
Laid low by Heavenly fire.

This does not even claim to be precisely an epitaph. Therimachos is not yet buried. And the name ("Beast-fighter"), by its very fitness for an ideal herdsman, may betray the light touch of pure invention.

It will doubtless be agreed, at least, that the real inscriptions, both those collected in the present section and the various examples offered elsewhere, will easily assay a higher percentage of poetic gold than those of any ordinary modern "God's Acre." It would not be easy to cite any Christian epitaph more perfect, in form, than the farewell to Sabinus. As to spirit and feeling, the artist is the child of his people and his age. But Lowell's thoughts were far from any of the fine arts when he said: "Time makes ancient good uncouth."

Creative beauty of form however simple, and expression of the loving tenderness in human hearts, is not made uncouth by time, nor yet by newer-fashioned utterances of love and truth. Indeed it was Lowell too who quoted on a memorable occasion: "Time looks in the face of the Greek Muse only to forget his errand."

XVI

JOY OF THE SEA

ESPECIALLY in the section of the Anthology made up of epitaphs, the discomforts and deadly perils on the waters are inevitably prominent. Yet the eagerness of the Hellene for voyaging, discovery, colonization, commerce, is a very large motive in his story. The brief poems, the Epigrammata proper, naturally deal with single incidents (which on the sea are usually tragic), not with any large general sentiment or picture. But the great collection has overflowed any such narrow definition in numerous directions. It is easy to find longer poems more characteristic, doubtless, of the usual happier feeling. Perhaps, then, such a brief section as this, at least, should follow the Epitaphia, as a corrective.

Spring in Port.

By Theaetetos.

Now is the verdurous meadow at fruitful birthtide abloom with the flower of the rose.
Now the cicada, aloft on the uppermost bough of the cypress,
Maddened with music, enraptures the binder of sheaves.
Now doth the fluttering swallow, a mother devoted,
Build her nest underneath the eaves, and into the claywalled chambers welcome her brood.
Now with the calm, well-belovèd of Hesperus, over the boat-dotted surface extended,
Lieth the sea, not gustily spattering over the sterns nor spewing the foam on the beaches.
Now to Priapus, the warden of waters, the anchorage-giver, O sailor,

Offer the glimmering disc of a mullet, a cuttle-fish, or a melodious scaros:
Then may ye peacefully sail over seas to thy bourn at the end of Ionian waters.

The modern name, "parrot-fish," does not elucidate the singular adjective "melodious," for it refers merely to the brilliant colors of the scarus or wrasse. The curious ancient belief was that it chewed the cud: audibly it would seem. Sailors' sense of melody is notoriously catholic.

On the very next page of the Anthology follows a poem which, though by another hand, might almost be regarded as a sequel to the last quoted.

A Poet Outward Bound.

By Antiphilos.

Protector, harbor warden, hail!
Speed, blessed Lord, our parting sail,
With sunny skies and gentle breeze,
Toward Triton's realm, the deeper seas.
Still onward to the Pythian shrine
Guide thou secure this bark of mine.
Thence, if we poets are in Phoebus' care,
Before the Western wind untroubled shall we fare.

The voyage is from Athens, or perhaps Corinth, via Delos, across the isle-dotted Aegean, to a port in Western Asia Minor. A similar trader's voyage up the Adriatic is given space elsewhere. But there is one poem (for which, in truth, this little Excursus is admitted), certainly unique among the Epigrammata, and difficult to match even in the choral odes of the Hippolytos, in Theocritos, or any other Greek poet, for its joyous utterance of the charm of outdoors, and especially, of "the old trail, the long trail, the trail that is always new," the swaying sea-path.

"When the Red Gods Call."

By Antiphilos.

High some day on the stern may my cot be set, and above it
Loudly the awning resound under the beat of the spray.
Out of its hearth-stones flicker the fire: and upon it a kettle
Swinging. With meaningless sound still may the bubbles uprise.
Next may I see our boy make ready the meat. Be the table
Merely a rough ship-plank, covered above with a cloth.
Add but a set of quoits, and the sailors' song!—Such a fortune
Once was allotted to me, lover of life among men.

XVII

WIT, HUMOR, SARCASM, AND CRITICISM

SOME of these may perhaps be found in all tolerable verse. Literature is, on high authority, a "criticism of life." Witless poetry would be poor stuff indeed. And in fact, the repeated references, used elsewhere, to *supra et infra, passim,* would be especially in order here. Nevertheless, there is a fair heap of material not so easily put in order under any other rubric.

There is an interesting borderland where one may doubt the poet's own full consciousness of his mirth-provoking quality, or where any levity is but a sunny ripple on a deep and steady current: as indeed it should perhaps always be. When we hear the infuriated lover threaten the death of the duenna for slapping the cheek of the too complaisant ingénue, it may be a sincere utterance of feeling—or the scholastic Agathias may be enjoying his light-hearted genre sketch much as we do. When the drunken crone's tomb is surmounted by a wineglass, and she is taunted with her inability to drain it as of old, the artist takes, at least, an alien attitude to his subject: whether austere, cynical, or sportive, may be debated. The translator hesitated whether to place here the old millstone, triumphant over its former master, surmounting his grave, even claiming it was really always more his tyrant than his slave.

But the line of serious or even artistic purpose certainly is, not rarely, quite overleaped. No higher tribute than a laugh is demanded, *e.g.,* for the little court-scene.

The Impartial Judge.

By Nicarchos.

Two men went to court: and between them neither
Could hear: but the judge was deafer than either.

"He owes me for five months' rent!" cried Biton.
"But I always have ground it at night!" quoth Criton.
So the judge sums up: "Oh well, she's your mother,
"One ought to support her as much as the other."

There is no doubt a grim Scotch seriousness behind the unexpected trip of the phrase in the Solomon-like lists of perils to be shunned.

Beware!

Anon.

Beware of a cobra, a toad, or a viper,—or Laodiceans; and then I bid you beware of a dog run mad:—and:—the Laodiceans again.

For the dog we express regret. Even mad, he is not at home, for us, in any such galley. But memories of street-scenes in any Asiatic city make his inclusion explicable. There he often seems more jackal than wolf: with the added vices of "civilization."

Sometimes the essential modernness of a rude skit tempts to the use even of "thieves' Latin" in the rendering, *e.g.*, of the excessively vulgar "croak," instead of the last word in

Musical Criticism.

By Nicarchos.

Fatal to men, it is said, is the midnight note of a raven.
Yet—bid Democritos sing! Even the raven will die!

The art critic in general is rather gentler now than of old. The Maria Pavlova of her day danced somewhat such character-studies as are the present fashion. As Niobè she became petrified, as Daphnè she is transmuted into the laurel-tree. Whereon the critic remarks:

Critic, Old School.

By Palladas.

Snub-nosed Memphis dances in Niobè's part, and in Daphne's:
Daphne seemed but a stock: Niobè liker a stone.

The physician and his safely hidden "mistakes" are no less an old, old story:

Hopeless Case.

By Nicarchos.

Yesterday Marcos the doctor was called to Zeus, there, over the way.
—Even tho' marble he be, and Zeus, his funeral is today.

It is too far away now to determine how openly those jests were aimed at real individuals which seem like more or less savage shafts of ridicule or extravagant fun.

Lissom Maid.

By Lucilius.

Fanning lean Artemidora, as soundly asleep she lay,
Demetrius blew her completely out of doors and away.

As is too often to be noted throughout the Anthology, another versifier thinks he can outdo this marvel, or it may really be a second shot by the same archer; which would lessen the probable realism of either.

Thinnest of Ghosts.

By Lucilius.

Lean Gaius, yesterday, breathing his last
Left for his burial nothing at all.
Just as in life he down to Hades passed,
And flits the thinnest shadow of them all.

His friends bore to the grave an empty bier,
But wrote upon it: "Gaius lieth here."

So when a runner with five opponents comes in *seventh,*—his attendant on the sidelines in his heavy overcoat distancing him with ease,—our credulity is strained. But when the next sprinter falls far behind the speed of the stone statues of gods or elder athletes that line the course, why, then we realize that the actual rivalry is not in the art of Atalanta, but of Ananias.

When two lines of jesting need a dozen of explanation, the ingenuity seems excessive. The Greeks used the alphabet also for numerals: A standing for "one," B for "two," etc. It happens that the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth letters also spell a Greek word, an imperative, *zethi,* "live thou!" (The third person, *zeto,* "May he live long" is the regular modern Greek "Hurrah," corresponding exactly to French "Vive" and Italian "Viva," very closely, also, to the Japanese *"Banzai,"* "May he live a thousand years.") The couplet now sufficiently annotated in advance is, then:

Early Advocate of Labor Reform.

Anon.

Six hours a day to tiresome tasks are quite enough to give.
The plain signs following after say distinctly *zethi,*—live!

Some of the bitterest poems in the Anthology are in the form of epitaphs, real or pretended. With a cross-reference to that section in particular, this hasty review of Greek jesting may draw to a close.

For the last word may be offered a half-serious confession of the master-poet, who rarely encourages even a smile over the tortures inflicted by Eros.

Love's St. Sebastian.

By Meleager.

By Heliodora's sandal, Timò's hair,
Nay, by Demarion's perfumed portico,
By Anticleia's dainty smile I swear,
By Dorothea's wreaths that freshly blow,
Thy quiver, Eros, holds no more a dart:
For every wingèd shaft has pierced my heart!

Of course there are manifold more attempts, even fairly successful attempts, to be witty, in the Anthology, than have been touched on here. But it is believed nothing of first-rate importance, both as humor and as poetry, would be easy to find. One great wit Greece produced, perhaps the greatest of all time, at any rate the greatest ancient combination of uproarious fun and lofty poetic genius. But there was no second Aristophanes: and perhaps the creator of Jack Falstaff stands supreme and alone, even from this viewpoint.

XVIII

HISTORIC CITIES, SITES, AND DEEDS

THIS and the following studies deal chiefly with verse remote from mere Nature, and more ambitious, or scholarly, than the main mass of the Anthology.

As one turns slowly the all but endless pages of the Epigrammata, giving a casual ear to the many voices in numberless keys, perhaps nothing gives a stronger feeling of the late, unheroic, decadent general character than the often disconsolate sketches of once mighty cities, and other such echoes of glorious memories. A few of these may be briefly passed in review. They are of course avowedly glances turned far backward.

First in early mythic importance once, and actually long first among all the sea-isles in honor, deserted Delos may well speak for all.

Delos Desolate.

By Antipater.

Would that tide-driven thro' the depths I drifted
As ere unto the light I was uplifted
And, firm-set, with the fatal honor gifted
  That Leto's offspring should on me be born!
For lifeless now are all my woodland alleys,
Deserted stand my mountains and my valleys,
And silent pass me by the stately galleys
  Where, under Hera's curse, I lie forlorn.

The situation of Corinth is so favorable that she could not but rise after each destruction. An allusion to her will be

remembered, in the graphic list of desolate sites with which "the friend of Rome's least mortal mind" tries to console Cicero's grief over Tullia, by reminding him of the ephemeral nature common to man and all his works.

Nereids' Dirge for Corinth.

By Antipater.

Where, far-seen Corinth, is thy beauty now?
Where now thy towery coronal, priz'd of old?
Where are the shrines? the homes? and where the dames
From Sisyphus sprung? Where now the myriads
That thronged thy ways?
No trace of thee remains,
City of countless woes. All hath been seized
And utterly devoured by ruthless War.
We Nereids, daughters of Oceanus,
Alone are left, the halcyons of thy doom.

The last two lines are true, in a sense clearly not intended. With name hardly changed, the *"Neraïdes"* have survived, in local belief, all their sister-nymphs of fountain, grove, or hill, and, usurping very largely the functions of their lost sisters, linger on today as the last remnant of the old mythology.

A curious bit of evidence that the Hamadryad had quite vanished in Byzantine days may be drawn from the last line of a poem whose general purpose is to revive the very earliest Hellenic feeling. Protesilaos, the voluntary first martyr of the war against Troy, naturally typifies the deathless bitterness of the old feud. The nymphs remind us of their presence about Andromache's family tomb, but are not Hamadryades.

Undying Hate.

By Antiphilos.

O Protesilaos of Thessaly, aftertimes
Shall sing of thee, whose fall assured the doom
For Troy ordained. In the deep elmwood shade
The nymphs keep watch about thy monument
That faces hated Ilios. Ev'n the trees
Are wrathful, and, if ever they descry
The Trojan wall, shake down their withered leaves.
So furious was of old the heroes' ire,
Whereof some portion even yet remains,
Surviving in the *soulless* foliage.

—But the Hamadryad's spirit pervaded every twig and leaf of her tree.

Yet more surprising, by far, than a temporarily lifeless Corinth, is the assertion of so careful a writer as Strabo, that, of all Mycenae's splendor, no trace remained! The mention of Troy as still standing refers to the renewed city of filial Roman fostering, Troy being regarded indeed by the Romans as a mother-city demanding their loyal care. At the present day the wide-strewn remains of Alexandria Troas exceed a hundred-fold the traces of the little hill-fortress at Trojan Hissarlik, even through all its seven or more reincarnations combined.

Mycenae's Boast.

Author Doubtful.

If I am but a lonely dust-heap old,
Tho' I be less conspicuous to behold
Than natural rock,—yet whoso hath looked down
Upon the walls of glorious Troy-town,
Whereon I trampled,—he may know thereby
How lordly in the antique world was I.
And if old age despiteful prove toward me,
I am content, for Homer shall my witness be.

"Homer" here doubtless includes the lost poems of the Epic Cycle, from which, *e.g.*, Virgil drew his great picture of Troy's capture in Aeneid II. The actual Iliad does, indeed, foreshadow that downfall of which Mycenae boasts. But the Homeric poet, though a Greek, almost always seems to love Troy best of cities.

Homer Fame-giver.

By Alphaeus.

Still do we hear thy wail, Andromache,
Troy from her eminence tottering we see,
  The strife of Ajax, Hector bound
  And dragged by steeds around
  His goodly city turret-crown'd.
This, Homer's Muse revealeth to our sight!
Homer, in whom no single city takes delight,
But every clan of Hellas' sons and daughters,
That dwells on either side the Aegean waters.

—There are many other such poems, but these are fairly typical.

Somewhat akin, but as a rule composed nearer the actual age of the heroic deeds themselves, are the records of great victories—or honorable defeats. One, in bold hyperbole, treats the Quixotic final stand and death of Leonidas' three hundred as a full success, contrasting it with Xerxes' ability to bridge the Hellespont for his army and dig the canal behind Mount Athos for his fleet. If a gigantic basrelief had been cut upon the cliff-face at Thermopylae, such as is soon to commemorate our Civil War, these lines might have interpreted it.

At Thermopylae.

By Parmenion.

He that reversed the paths of sea and strand,
Marched over waters, sailed across the land,
With thrice an hundred lances hath been tamed
By Sparta's war-god. Lands and seas, be shamed!

Herodotus mentions, also, a stone lion set up on the spot where the royal leader of the three hundred fell. An inscription by Simonides, already quoted, declaring that he who sleeps beneath the stone was also kingly and leonine in nature, certainly seems to fit this occasion best.

Another inscription is not only in the Anthology, but fragments of it, in fourth-century B. C. lettering, have been dug up at Athens. It is an alluring surmise that it honored those who perished in a battle which no local pride could distort into a victory: *viz.,* Chaeronea, where in 338 B. C. the long political duel of Demosthenes and Philip ended, and Athens' salvation, like Thebes' destruction, hung thereafter on the caprice or self-interest of a foreign despot. The tone of veiled gratitude, and hopelessness, suits the time, when frankness in praise of the dead might be fatal to the living.

Heroic Failure.

Anon.

O Time, thou god who keepest watch and ward
On every mortal deed, ill done or well,
Fitly do thou our suffering record
For all men, telling them how we, who fain
Had saved the holy land of Hellas, fell
Upon the illustrious Boeotian plain.

These, and their like, are the valued contributions of the Anthology to a Corpus of historical and pseudo-historical

inscriptional verse. Two quatrains may be added as examples of ethical or poetic quality. Here as everywhere the ascription to an especially eminent author does not have decisive weight. It is possible for a rhetorician of any age to compose, *e.g.*, "A Simonidean Epitaph" on the men of Marathon, Salamis, Mycale, or some other "famous victory."

Effort is in itself Victory.

By Simonides.

If Valour's best be gallantly to die,
Fortune to us of all men grants it now.
We to set Freedom's crown on Hellas' brow
Laboured, and here in ageless honour lie.

Their City's Pride.

Anon.

As the stars are of Heaven the crown,
As the Spring is the glory of Earth,
As Hellas hath pride in our town,
So, in these, hath the land of their birth.

As our own proud grief reminds us today, the precise historical details and dates are of minor value, to the lover of life, of service, and of its poetic appreciation. Perhaps the next citation should lift us into a purely imaginative air, while reminding us how the Trojan epic dominated the Greek imagination to the very end.

By the two promontories, between which Scamander flows seaward down the famous Trojan plain, stand even today the two tumuli bearing the names of Achilles and his cousin Ajax. Through their respective fathers, Peleus and Telamon, both these honored heroes may bear the patronymic from their grandsire's name, Aeacides. Both perished in rather unheroic fashion before victory gave Troy into the Hellenes'

hands. Achilles, dying first, left a suit of armor, forged by the smith-god, for which stout Ajax and crafty Odysseus set up rival claims. Odysseus' tongue won him the prize, and Ajax in madness fell upon his own sword,—or as later poets invented, on the very sword presented to him by his chivalric foeman Hector after an indecisive duel. The present poem, rising in austerity high above the average of the Epigrammata, tells how the will of Olympus, and the surges of the sea, righted this wrong of Ajax, even so late. It will be recalled that Achilles' shield, with its elaborate decorations, is the centerpiece, as it were, of the suit of magic armor, which is Hephaestus' masterpiece and pride. The present tale is wholly post-Homeric.

The Justice of the Gods.

Anon.

Achilleus' shield, that Hector's blood had stained,
By the folk's judgment sly Odysseus gained.
Yet, in his shipwreck on an alien shore,
A mighty wave that buckler seized, and bore
—Not unto Ithaca, but—far away
Where in his shoreward tomb stout Aias lay.
  Upon the beach the buckler lies,
  Shaking the tumulus, and cries:
"Come forth, O Telamonides!
Thy right returneth to thee from the seas.
Lo, for thine own the buckler of Aeacides!"

This alluring subject, the continuance, and constant growth in detail, of the great myth of Helen of Troy and the havoc of the heroes, flies high above the ordinary level of the Anthology, and would require a ponderous and learned monograph. The especial brevity of this treatment is no discourtesy to a task fitter for younger and sturdier

sinews. (There is a very brief chapter on this theme in the author's *Art and Humanity in Homer*.)

Here may be best added two "poems of places," one associating itself with the best-known of all classical poets, the other with a most striking monument of ancient art. The latter reference is to the beautiful Greek temple at Bassae, often visited, and admired alike for its perfect proportions and fine preservation, and also for the wild beauty of its natural background. The temple is ignored, but the landscape nobly outlined, in this little poem.

A Hunter's Trophy.

By Crinagoras.

Caves of the Nymphs, in fountains rich, that drip
Abundant water down this jagged cliff,
And thou, reëchoing haunt of pine-crowned Pan,
Where he abides at Bassae's rocky foot,
Ye trunks of ancient juniper, revered
By huntsmen, and ye, Hermes' stone-piled seats,
—The spoils of the swift stag-hunt graciously
Take, from Sosándros, master of the chase.

All lovers of Virgil will recall (Aeneid III, 274-288) the approach to the Epirote "Temple of Apollo, which was the terror of sailor-folk," and which, at a distance, seems on the very edge of a vertical cliff; but reefs and shoals appear on closer approach. Aeneas' men land on the shore destined to later fame through Augustus' victory at Actium. In the present poem a Greek trading vessel's crew are bound on the same coasting voyage northward. Their humble gifts and prayer contrast strangely with the mighty world-mission imagined for the Trojans and Aeneas.

Sailors' Gift to Apollo.

By Philippos.

Phoebus, on Leucas' headland steep,
By seas Ionian buffeted,
Farseen of sailors from the deep,
Accept this loaf of barley-bread
Well-kneaded, with the sacral wine,
Diluted, in a little cup,
And short-lived lamp whose wick drinks up
With thirsty lip the oil.
Incline
Thine ear to us in recompense,
And speed us on our voyage hence
Until, with favoring wind, alive
And safe at Actium we arrive.

All the verses of the present section are especially remote from the general tone and spirit of the Anthology. Most of them glance far back at the heroic age, with clear consciousness of present decadence. In a different sense, the haughty epitaphs in Simonides' tones match ill with the infinitely lighter themes and treatment of Meleager, his friends, and his successors. It is the more necessary that such elements of the great collection should at least be fairly indicated and illustrated.

XIX

POETRY ON POETS

THERE is much literary criticism in the Anthology: much good criticism, indeed, though often made tedious by repetition, when half-a-dozen versifiers try to improve the mere phrasing of the same judgment. The present group of examples attempts simply to offer poems, actual poetry rather than the soundest analytical utterance, which, in itself, can rise, at best, no higher than rhythmic—or berhymed—prose: even though a Pope, a Dryden, or a Doctor Holmes, cap the couplets.

Even before Homer must be set the mythical Orpheus, who may also be accounted a Greek poet, if only because what men believe to have been is often more vital than what has merely happened.

Lament for Orpheus.

By Antipater.

Orpheus, never again thou'lt lead enchanted the oaktrees,
Never the rocks, or the herds grazing at will on the plains:
Never wilt lull into quiet the crashing thunder, the hailstorm,
Flurries of windswept snow, waters that ever lament.
Now thou'rt dead, unceasing bewail thee Mnemosyne's daughters,
All, but Calliope most, she who was mother to thee.

. . . Why do we mortals grieve, if our sons by Hades are ravished,
Whom not even a god may from his offspring avert?

If perchance anyone presently finds the praise of Homer excessive, he may compare the remark of Andrew Lang, when a mature scholar, familiar with the best in Greek and

also many other literatures: *viz.*, that, if the dire choice were offered, he would, though with bitter regret, let all the rest of Hellenic poetry go, and cleave to the Iliad and Odyssey. (The present scribe has decided, after many a year of deliberation, that he could not say "Amen.") The name of Homer was used in classical times quite generally, also, to include a whole cycle of epic poetry, now lost, not wholly unworthy to stand beside the two survivors.

Homer, Poet Sovereign.

By Leonidas.

So often as great Helios whirls his fiery car along,
Even Selenè's hallowed disc, and all the stars, are dim.
So is it, too, when Homer sings amid the minstrel throng:
For he, the Muses' beacon, is unquestioned lord of song,
And all the lesser lights must be wholly eclipsed by him.

The early philosophic writers of Ionia seem only less remote, personally, than the epic poets; and Heracleitos, in particular, appeared to pride himself in his personal reserve, and even in a certain oracular obscurity of utterance. The verses upon him, presently cited, remind one somehow of the remark uttered to Mr. Norton by Carlyle when Arnold died: "I'm sorry for Matthew: he'll be seriously disappointed with Heaven." However, these supposed scenes in the world of the dead are usually treated, in the Anthology, with a goodly share of Hellenic sincerity and dignity—not so common with us, who are still a race of jesters even at St. Peter's gate.

Heracleitos in Hades.

Anon.

I,—I am Heracleitos! Why drag me to and fro?
'Twas not for you I labored, ye folk that nothing know,

But the few that understand me. One that is truly wise
Outweigheth twice ten thousand dolts, who are nothing in mine eyes.
Mere numbers count for naught! And this in the domain
Of Persephone and Pluto, as on earth, I still maintain.

Perhaps the fairest parallel to this sentiment, after all, is Walter Savage Landor's prophecy as to his own posthumous fame: "I shall dine late. But the dining-room will be well-lighted. The guests will be few but select. . . ."

In a very different fashion, the praise of Sappho is, as it were, dramatized; or, at least, we see her actually leading a religious pageant. The association with Hera, patroness of marriage and motherhood, lifts the poetess above the breath of ribald scandal.

To Hera's Shrine.

Authorship Uncertain.

Ye Lesbian dames, in mazy dance
Toward large-eyed Hera's fane advance.
To the high goddess there enthroned
Your choral chant shall be intoned.
Marching with you shall Sappho hold
Her lyre of magic wrought in gold.
Most blessèd in your dance are ye:
And ye shall deem the harmony
Is from the very harpstrings of Calliope.

The tributes to two other women-poets may be set beside Sappho's. For Erinna, whose brief brilliancy may be compared to Keats', no rival is even remotely suggested.

Swan and Jackdaws.

By Antipater.

Brief was Erinna's utterance, ended soon
Her tale of songs,—yet each a Muse's boon!

So is she unforgot, nor drifts from sight
Under the shadowy black wings of Night.
But we, the countless swarming myriads all
Of bardlings, swift into Oblivion fall.
Better the swan's brief note, than chattering
Of countless daws, dispersed thro' all the clouds of Spring!

As to the next poem quoted, one may well share the Greek editor's doubt whether Nossis herself composed it. Moreover, even the positiveness of Professor Mackail still leaves it less than certain that it is a real challenge, a claim of full equality, or more. Aldrich has a loyal poetic acknowledgment of Tennyson's overlordship: but Longfellow's "challenge" is equally modest, despite the obsolescent word which he used —and which is here borrowed—for title.

"Wapentake."

By Nossis (?).

If to the Mitylenean land,
Famed for the lovely choral dancing-band,
Thou come, the land that set of old aflame
The flower of Sappho's grace,
Tell there, O passerby,
That dear unto the Muses, too, was I.
And know, that Nossis is my name,
Locris my birth- and dwelling-place.

It is much easier to accept Aeschylos' Sicilian epitaph as his own composition. One is glad to believe that he, like so many lesser poets but not less heroic men, living and dead, of the present generation, set patriotic duty high above art or artist's fame. Herodotus gives the dramatist's brother a high place among the martyrs of Marathon. That may help explain a certain grimness of tone, and the naming of the lesser and earlier victory only, not Salamis, which he and his

doubly glorified with spear and pen. The very literal version is inevitably plagiarized, piecemeal, from sundry of the myriad older translators.

A Patriot's Tomb.

By Aeschylos.

Athenian Aeschylos this tomb doth hide,
Euphorion's son. He in fertile Gela died.
His valor Marathonian groves can tell,
And longhaired warrior Medes who knew it well.

The famous poem on Sophocles is here omitted, simply because, after due effort, nothing was produced fit to bear any comparison with Stirling's beautiful and well-known version.

A forerunner of both these supreme tragic poets, Thespis, is by no means so familiar a name. His work is so wholly lost, that we can only repeat the tradition: He first introduced, we are told, between the choral odes, a narrative or description by a reciter: or the "first actor." Aeschylos by adding a second actor made spoken dialogue possible, while the chorus stood mute. Thence to Rostand and Maeterlinck there is no absolute break.

The Pioneer.

By Dioscorides.

I, Thespis, in dramatic mould
Cast the goat-song of old,
A joy to simple village men.
A goat indeed, or crate of figs, was then
The victor's prize.
Juniors in later days
Shall alter tragedy in countless ways,
For many inventions Time shall bring to light;
—Yet shall mine own abide as mine of right.

Contrasting with this noble dignity, perhaps equally pleasing in its own fashion, is the epitaph of gay-hearted Rhinthon, also an inventor:—of burlesque, or tragi-comedy.

"Glad did I live."

By Nossis.

With laughter pealing clear and high,
With hearty greeting, pass me by.
Rhinthon of Syracuse am I:
The humblest singer the Muse has known;
Yet with my merry-tragic tone
I've won an ivy all mine own.

Among all his contributors, contemporary or ancient, Meleager in his Proem describes Archilochos especially, with utmost frankness, as *bitter*. The worst tale told of the errant soldier-poet concerns his series of most unchivalric lampoons on the daughters of the family into which he had vainly endeavored to marry: so savage, indeed, that they finally hung themselves in their mortification. It is distinctly gratifying to discover that at least one later ancient has shared our indignation over this episode. The reproach nominally aimed at the Muses is an effective condemnation of the poet who has dishonored the craft.

Defense of Innocence.

By Meleager (?).

By Pluto's right hand, by the darksome bed
Of queen Persephone, even mid the dead
We swear, that we were virginal indeed.
Full many a slander in his bitter screed
Against us wrote Archilochos, who used
The noblest gifts ignobly, and abused

The innocent.
Pierians, why did ye
Lend to his lying words the wings of Poesy?

We would gladly accredit this poem to the pen of Meleager, but the style seems quite remote from his.

The last poem to be cited here has long been a general favorite, and often translated. Among the latest and best versions is one by the veteran protagonist of Hellenics in America, Basil L. Gildersleeve. Though generally classed as a poem of friendship, it is, also, a poet's tribute to a poet—the latter a late-born namesake of the austere philosopher Heracleitos mentioned above. The assurance of immortality for his lyric "Nightingales" has not saved them from sinking in "the stream whose waves are years."

The aim of the present attempt is a very simple one: to express just what the poem means to one sympathetic reader.

Friends and Poets.

By Kallimachos.

He, Heracleitos, who thy fate did tell,
Moved me to tears, as I recalled so well
How we oft talked the sun adown the West.
Thou without doubt, my Halicarnassian guest,
Art ashes long and long ago.
But yet thy Nightingales shall live, I know.
Hades, who ravishes all things away,
On them no hand shall lay.

All prophecies of deathless earthly fame are rash. We merely surmise that Heracleitos the Less "published" a "volume" of verses which, if they really pleased the erudite Alexandrian librarian, would nowadays gather dust in the poet's desk instead.

XX

PRACTICAL PHILOSOPHY

IT is a too general impression that the lyrics of the Anthology are both prevailingly erotic, in a crude sense, and have little or no direct ethical value. It is true that the directly didactic tone is comparatively rare. That is, even these minor poets, being, generally speaking, true poets, try not to preach. For that very reason, the poetic value of the selections that can be used in this section may doubtless prove to be rather below the average. Nevertheless, this also is a common and by no means valueless type of the Epigrammata: *viz.*, those which essay to interpret ordinary life in simple philosophic terms.

Let us begin with the two most obvious, and most opposite, outlooks on life. With hardly a change in local color or phrasing, they could be uttered anywhere, today, by quite uninspired moralists.

Pessimism.

By Poseidippos.

What path shall we pursue?
For strife and ills
Are in the agora, in the household, cares;
Upon the land, unending toil; at sea,
Peril; abroad, if thou hast wealth, is dread;
If nothing,—misery. Dost thou wed? Not free
From worry shalt thou live. Unwedded? Nay,
Still lonelier is thy lot. Children are burdens,
Yet without offspring crippled is thy life.
Youth-time is foolish, forceless are grey hairs.
—Either not to be born, therefore, were best,
Or, being born, to perish presently.

Of course, the only retort to all this is to laugh—and turn the pattern over. This easy task has been duly performed.

Optimism.

By Metrodoros.

Pursue thou every path!
For there is fame,
And wise deeds, in the agora, in the home,
Repose. The charm of Nature is in the fields,
On sea is profit. In an alien land,
If thou hast wealth, is honor, while no man
Need know thy poverty. Art wedded? So
Thy race abides on earth. Unmarried? Then
Thy lot is easier. Children bring delight,
Care-free is childlessness.
Not from these two
Thy choice, ne'er to be born or straight to die,
For goodly is this life in every way.

"Each man," says Coleridge, "is born an Aristotelian or a Platonist; and few Aristotelians, no Platonists, are ever won over." Even so, Gratiano's effort to "convert" the melancholy Antonio was apparently as vain as Portia's appeal to Shylock's better nature. Happily, optimism has, in this country at least, a safe majority, which higher ideals, better cooking, and more leisure for outdoor exercise may constantly, if slowly, increase.

Another deep-cut cleft yawns between the debased form of Epicureanism, and the higher Stoicism—if we may not rather speak of plain self-indulgence and self-improvement. Again both sides shall have brief audience.

The Hedonist.

By Sardanapalus.

Still mine is what I drank, or ate, or sensuously enjoyed;
But all past blessings else, alike, are wholly lost and void.

The Retort Strenuous.

By Crates the Theban.

Still mine is what I learned, or thought,
Or by the Muse was wisely taught
In reverence: but all else, I say,
With my pyre's smoke hath passed away.

"Be a person, while you respect the personality of others," is the substance of an Hegelian maxim. A stern reproof of Dante by Virgil packs into a single verse at least one phase of the same command:

"Go thou straight on, and leave the folk to talk."

This, again, runs remarkably close to a Greek couplet, now imbedded in the Anthology, which is, however, in all likelihood, a mere fragment, torn out of a very early elegy, and may have meant something much ignobler.

Sate Thyself.

By Mimnermos.

Please thine own soul. Among thy hasty neighbors
One still will carp at, one approve, thy labors.

Of course, this is safe advice only to the possessor of a pure and lofty soul, fit to be self-centered.

But the craving for the God-speed of human sympathy is by no means unuttered.

"Come not when I am dead."

Anon.

No myrrh nor wreaths on stony pillars cold!
Nor bid the pyre blaze: wasted were thy gold.
Love thou the living. Tho' the rich wine sink
In ashes, 'tis but mud: the dead man cannot drink.

For our next title we may borrow a phrase from Lowell's very early poem, though he pretends to speak for age as well. But at seventy he was, for the most part, too cheery a disciple of wise "Rabbi Ben Ezra" to have composed it. The Greek poem, also, is more likely to have been written at twenty than at seventy—if the transcriber, as his own seventh decade wanes, knows aught of adolescent and senile psychology.

"When I was a beggarly boy."

Anon.

Once was I young, and poor: but now am I wealthy;—and agèd.
Whether at first or at last, wretched am I among men.
Then had I power to enjoy, when Destiny gave me no portion:
Now, when nothing is sweet, infinite riches are mine!

This is, if we hear it aright, a boyish fancy, probably not so much morbid as merely crude. Many will remember that, at eighteen, we also truly thought wealth, acquired after thirty, would be useless, because it would be too late to have any fun. But "the margin fades forever and forever as we move." We do not reach that old age which youth beholds so plain. President Eliot is as juvenile still as—Clémenceau! Gladstone was cut off in his prime. 'Tis not a question of "added years." Persius was born old. Byron aged prematurely. Béranger, Goldoni, Victor Hugo, grew eighty years *young:* did they die at all?

Of course the brevity and uncertainty of life was already a theme only too hackneyed: though—here too conclusions quite diverse are constantly drawn.

"Eat, Drink, and be Merry!"

By Marcus Argentarius.

Six feet of earth will be thine,
No sunlight upon thee will shine,

When once thou'rt ended with life.
Joyously drain, then, the wine,
Encircling thy beautiful wife
With thine arms. . . .
But the sterner voice breaks in!

"Tomorrow, and Tomorrow!"

By Julius Polyaenus.

Hope ever steals away
The passing day.
Swift comes the final sun:
Most tasks undone.

Saner than the one, certainly gentler than the other, is a voice that may well be merely a lover's, gently pleading for happiness, ere youth passes.

Rose and Thorn.

Anon.

A brief hour blooms the rose. If that be sped,
No rose thou findest, but its thorn instead.

Once, though to be sure in late Byzantine days, a really sensible and temperate word is uttered on the last topic upon which it would be expected. To Meleager—or, indeed, to Euripides—Love is always a madness, wrought by the deadly venom of Eros' dart. We, too, generally treat true love as a sudden impulse, not to be controlled by the judgment, much less by coldly selfish motives, or wise parental forethought.

Curiously enough, the modern Greeks are about the most practical and cold-blooded of races in their views on the marriage problem, sternly condemning any sentiment, or even undue freedom of choice by youth and maid themselves, as

sure to bring swift disillusionment and misery. Many a time did they say to the writer: "Lord Gulielme, how can your father let you wander about spending your savings in foreign lands, instead of earning the money for your sisters' dowry? Of course no one will marry them without it."

Between the ancient and the modern Greek stands this nameless sixth-century wooer, or, at least, his judicious poetic adviser, who might be speaking in the midst of the social life in free, sane, yet idealistic America today.

Common Sense in Courtship.

By Agathias.

If thou'rt in love, let not thy spirit be
Wholly cast down, nor all too humbly plead.
Be somewhat stout of heart, uplift thy brows,
—Yet in thy glances, too, be kindliness.
'Tis woman's way, to show indeed disdain
At overhaughtiness, but yet again
To flout the man too utterly abased.
Ever in love is he most fortunate
Who mingles both: and, showing gentleness,
Unites with it a touch of lordly pride.

Good advice, yes, indeed! But what saith old philosopher Aldrich?

"If you will let, *as none will do,*—
"Another's heartache serve for two" . . .

Is it quite certain that, in this perilous demesne, a poet could make his own flash of common sense serve even for *one,*—*e.g.*, for himself? What if this same sage counselor has, after all, left an actual record, as a lover, no whit better than Miles Standish's? That would, surely, excuse a moderate digression.

The poem already quoted Agathias might have composed at any age. The next is from his student-days, and was sent home—not to the lady of his dreams at all, but: to a brother poet! Already Priscilla archly smiles. After excellent detailed allusions to the sights and sounds of Spring about him, he sighs:

> "But what for me of sweetness have all these,
> Who fain would hear thy harpstrings' harmonies,
> And thy dear voice? A double loss is mine,
> Truly. For thee in loneliness I pine,
> And for my sweet kid. But the law's grim spell
> Afar detains me from that slender young gazelle."

The biological vacillation is by no means his worst. From friend Paulus' none too scornful rejoinder we stand amazed to learn, that the sacrifice of an hour, and an obol, could at any time have purchased balm for both heartaches.

> . . . "Impetuous Eros dwells not in thy breast.
> What Eros were he;—when the narrowest
> Of briny waters [*i.e.*, the Bosporus] keeps thee from the girl?
> Leander braved of old the eddying whirl
> Of Hellespont, obeying Eros' might:
> —And yonder run the ferries full in sight!"

—This curious group of three poems incidentally illustrates how futile it is to quote the Anthology, in general, as decisive for any matter, of fact, feeling, or belief. More than a dozen centuries, many lands, a thousand voices, known or oftener unknown, can never be safely listened to as one. Nay, even the poet and his heart's brother, or indeed Agathias wise and Agathias silly, may suddenly appear a thousand years apart!

Passing on from youth to the more general view of life, we have a striking echo of the trite "Carpe diem" injunction, in a slightly occult form.

"The Passing Day."

By Palladas.

As each night wanes we day by day are born,
In past existence having not a share.
Still from the lapse of yesterdays estranged,
This morn we enter on the life to be.
Speak not, old sir, of thy abundant years,
Who hast today no part in what is gone.

Emerson's own favorite, "Days,"—his despite its avowed Persian origin,—might be set beside this.

In general, however, there is a calmer contemplation and acceptance of life as a passing show, such as we would expect in a rather leisurely uneventful and unheroic epoch. Philemon and Menander have exactly similar passages. The figure of the voyage, rather than our own favorite Westward path climbing and again descending, is natural for a coastwise and insular race, such as the Greeks must always be.

Voyage of Life.

By Palladas.

Life's voyage is perilous. On more piteous reefs
Oft do we strike than shipwrecked mariners.
And having Chance for pilot on our course
We fare, as on the sea, uncertain if
Prosperous, or otherwise. But all alike
We pass to harborage beneath the earth.

Quite as commonplace, and as apt to take a nautical turn, are what may be called the stock jests on certain oft-recurring incidents of life. One example will suffice, as these skits are hardly poetry, nor philosophy either.

"Ware Shoal!"

Anon.

If a man, wedded once, is planning again to be married,
He is a sailor who steers twice thro' a perilous strait.

Perhaps it is time to draw to a close, with a few glimpses of the ordinary late Greek attitude toward "The end of the play."

One can almost see the rather stolid, literal-minded, and fearless Gaffer who like King Cole "calls for his bowl" thus:

"Earth to Earth."

By Zonas.

Yon sweet cup fetch me, pray,
Of earthy clay.
Shaped of such earth was I,
And underneath that earth shall lie
After I die.

The same fearless motif rises to a lofty pathos, and real poetic charm, in a series of more or less cheery farewells to life, from which one, possibly the best in its kind, must suffice here, being indeed a loan from its proper section, the Epitaphia. Still, gentle resignation is philosophy, too; perhaps indeed the truest wisdom of all the schools.

"Green be the turf above thee."

Anon.

Dear Earth, into thy bosom take
Amyntichos the Ancient, for the sake
Of the long labors he has spent on thee.
He grafted stocks of many an olive-tree,
Oft did he deck thee with the Bacchic shoots,
Enriched thee in Demeter's corn and fruits,

Cutting the channels that the waters fill.
And therefore do thou still
Dot the Spring herbage with thy blossoms gay,
—And lightly rest upon that forehead gray.

XXI

CRYPTIC OR MYSTICAL EPIGRAMMATA ON LIFE

THIS section is in general fashion a continuance of the previous one. The title chosen is not ideally fit. "Esoteric Philosophy of Life" was rejected as over-ambitious. Possibly the poems here offered do not, from any point of view, make a single group or series at all. Some are of unsolved, perhaps insoluble mystery, others simply require more intimate sympathy with the Hellenic viewpoint, or even merely with figurative methods of expression, to become almost commonplace in their simplicity.

—Be it said at once, no important revelation as to the Greater Mysteries is to be sought in the Anthology. To Eleusis there is, indeed, occasional reference, but nothing more important than this echo to the closing verses of the great "Homeric" Hymn to Demeter.

The Mysteries.

By Crinagoras.

Tho' fixt in one abode thy home,
Tho' not by land or sea thou roam,
Thou once to Attica must fare,
And the high nightly mysteries there
Of great Demeter know.
So shall thy soul from care be freed
Thro' life, and lightly shalt thou speed
Whither we all must go.

Equally simple is the treatment of a marvel wrought, in a single night, at the same shrine: the giving of sight to one blind from birth.

Miracle at Eleusis.

By Antiphilos.

Neither the Mysteries nor the light of day
I had known, when my staff led me on my way
Unto the temple, where the Goddesses
Revealed them both. Without my staff, at ease,
I to my home descended! Yea, that night
Had rendered back to me the boon of sight.
So now mine eyes, than my tongue far more clear,
Bid men the rites of Deo to revere.

But a tiny nugget of thought, in a single hard-burdened line, illustrates our title better.

God and Man.

Anon.

Who was it said "God knoweth"? And why? For man knoweth also.

It seems to shoot wide indeed from the cardinal maxim of the Platonic Socrates, which insists that all sin is due to ignorance: meaning, without doubt, to a lack of adequate realization of all the consequences, at the instant when the evil choice is made. The emphasis, at any rate, appears to be here on the converse, *viz.*, that man need not appeal constantly for divine guidance, for he has sufficient enlightenment to make the right choice in all ordinary cases. One of Herodotus' finest anecdotes describes the wrath of Apollo, and the miserable fate of a whole city, because it had even asked, at his oracle, whether a fugitive suppliant should be handed over to his master's vengeance, though that master was the potent and dread monarch of Persia.—Or the line may condemn only the easy utterance of "God knows," "Gott weiss," "Dio lo sa," etc., meaning "I don't," when any

effort of thought, or inquiry, would bring easy-won knowledge.

More alluring is a couplet, doubly endeared to the translator because it was chosen for a bookmark and constant monitor by the late Walter Rauschenbusch, most generous of friends and most instructive and helpful of social philosophers.

Hope and Nemesis.

Anon.

Hope and Nemesis I have in kindliness carved at the altar.
Nothing shall ye possess: ever expectant be ye!

Nemesis, as was suggested elsewhere, is near of kin to Emerson's Compensation. The price must be paid, always and in full. The price of possession is usually satiety. The rose-flushed glorious peak, attained, is at best but common earth or rock, and perhaps only a jutting shoulder that concealed, from below, as do the Shining Cliffs above Delphi, long upward reaches and, unattained, far loftier ridges beyond. "Grant me, O God," prayed Lessing, "the boon, ever to struggle and progress, but never fully to attain." The sailors in Kipling's "Last Chantey" perhaps only say a sincere "Amen!" to that, despite the gruff irreverence of their manners.

Hope seems here to be accepted as Man's guardian spirit and kindly comrade. Other voices in the Anthology call her a mocker.

Good Riddance!

Anon.

Hope, and thou, Fortune, too,
A long farewell to you:

I've run to port!
Make now your sport
And laughter
Him who comes after.

The earliest ethical discussion of Hope in Greek is the familiar Pandora-myth, told by Hesiod with bitter pessimism. For him, the casket, or jar, Pandora's chief dower, is full of evils for mankind, and perhaps never meant to be unlocked. When it is opened they all fly about the earth, save Hope, who fails to escape. She would seem, then, herself to be a bane, a mockery, and as she is, in the poet's mind, still in durance, men know her not at all,—and should be thankful for that at least!

To the essayist this has always seemed a rather morbid, impious, and thankless distortion of a kindlier tale. Pandora (the "All-giver"), mother of mankind, may well have been Earth herself, as many have interpreted her. At Zeus' portal stands, indeed, a jar of ills, but another of blessings, though no mortal lot is dowered from that alone. The translator is as far from a clear conclusion as when he discussed the two Hesiodic Pandora-myths (in *Successors of Homer*), but he desires to add here a reference to a different treatment of the myth: by a would-be optimist, perhaps.

Twice-told Tale.

By Macedonius.

At the jar of Pandora I cannot but smile:
Yet it is not the woman I'm moved to revile,
But the wings of the Blessings! Aloft to the sky
Over dwellings of mortals they flutter on high;
—Would to earth they descended!—While under the lid
Pale, reft of her glory, the Lady is hid.
Life loses in both: she imprisoned grows old,
And the jar is despoiled of the boons it should hold.

That the dower of Pandora was one of blessings only, seems a bold innovation indeed. Hope is not named at all, and the words rendered by "woman" in vs. 2 and "Lady" vs. 6 are really the same (woman or wife): but the latter *must* allude to Hope, not to Pandora. The curious thing is, that Macedonius seems to refer to his own as a well-known and "orthodox" tradition, though it is so very different from the Hesiodic account. Are there other traces of the Macedonian variant?

Sometimes the only problem that a poem offers is the doubt whether it has a hidden or double meaning at all. Thus Professor Mackail sets at the head of the Erotica, and so of his entire series of selections, a sort of skolion (drinking-song), perhaps intended by its author as an introduction. The banquet he mentions may be a figurative and merely literary feast, *viz.*, the Erotica section, or even the entire Anthology itself. Yet both Plato and Xenophon describe an actual convivial gathering where, after due loyalty paid to Bacchus, he and the serious philosophers both were banned, while the whole discussion was devoted to the nature of Love. The reader may make his own decision, if he can, as to the literal or figurative intent in

A Symposium.

By Poseidippos.

Dole, Attic jar, thy Bacchic dew:
Refresh our revel, whereunto
  Each brings a share.
Zeno, wise swan, from speech refrain.
Mute, too, Cleanthes' Muse remain.
Eros, who giveth joy and pain,
  Be our sole care.

The third line is not decisive. The picnic, to which each guest fetched his fair portion of the feast, was as familiar in oldest

Arcadia as among modern Bohemians. Of course, the expression would also fit the many poetic contributors to the "feast of reason," no less.

Again, "Still waters run deep" is accepted as a figurative utterance of a shrewd observation on human nature. The translator is frankly in doubt about the question, whether the next citation is a vivid and earnest amplification of the same truth: but the intense feeling of the close seems to demand some such loftier purport, rather than a mere sketch of an actual freshet.

The Insolent Torrent.

By Antiphilos.

Why wilt thou lift thy crest so high,
Barring the feet of passers-by,
Mad torrent, from their road? 'Tis plain
That thou art drunken with the rain!
Not from the Nymph-protected springs
Thy stream its turbid water brings,
Rather, black clouds have lent it thee.
Soon shriveled by the sun thou'lt be,
—Great Helios, who knoweth best
Noble and baseborn streams to test.

Of course, such an intrusive freshet, or "spate," assailing the ancient highways, shared nothing of the reverence felt—and expressly ordained in Hesiod's "Wise Saws of Husbandry" —toward the most ancient settled streams, to which the oldest paths of men had bent and fitted themselves.

This recalls to mind a stranger quarrel between man and the waters. As in Northern lands to the Undines and water-sprites generally, so in all Hellas great honor was paid to the springs, with their guardian nymphs, many of whom have high place in mythic tradition. To drink in silence would

seem only reverent and fitting, "Nobility more nobly to repay." But the ancient commentators knew no more than we that an especial ban against even one uttered word was, at one such source, imperative. They are plainly puzzled by

The Spring of Silence.

By Julius Flaccus.

The Nymph (?). Dip without speaking!
The Traveler. But why?
N. Now dip not at all!
T. But what reason?
N. Sweet is my silent draught.
T. Nay, bitter thy water!
N. —Now drink it!
Bitter thou'lt find it indeed!
T. Thou dour one!
N. Aha!
Thou loquacious!

These shattered hexameters were doubtless intended to give the impression of the swift thrust and parry of the little verbal encounter.

Since it is a question of undue or unsuitable drinking, a poem or fable may also be set down, whose very pointlessness seems to demand some other-worldly turn of meaning. It reminds one in faraway fashion of the Kiplingesque subterranean "River of gold," overmastering all the other currents of human effort. Is the dragon here again the race of Judah?

Insatiate.

Anon.

Down to the river crawled a mighty snake
His thirst to slake.

—The river's bed is dust, its source is dried:
He is unsatisfied.

But here we are perhaps over the borders of a very different demesne, where mere puzzles and riddles are devised, just to prove the ingenuity of their creator, or his victim. The present subject is rather the covert or figurative suggestion of moral meaning. There is another type of poem perhaps rather to be excluded, where a mythic phraseology, or a more occult allusion to especially Greek feelings, cloaks a mere fanciful poetic idea without ethical purpose altogether. For instance; the single verse query:

Daphne by Ares assaulted? Alack! Where tarries Apollo?

This is a comparatively natural comment, for a Greek and a poet, on seeing an army forcing its way through the laurel and bearing it to earth: but it has no application to life. This type of instant imaginative appeal to myth requires separate exposition, and has received it elsewhere.

Sometimes any difficulty felt in the poem is due to our ignorance of its purely subjective and individual application. The American poet Stedman has recorded, more or less frankly, the divergent impulse, or need, that made him for many years more at home in Wall Street than on Helicon. If we knew the life of the next ancient writer as well, the citation might demand no other comment. (The obeisance to Nemesis in the fifth line is to be noted in passing.)

Poet's Remorse.

By Crinagoras.

How long, upon vain hopes intent,
Wilt thou, O soul, on riches bent,
Toward chilly cloudlands fluttering still,
With dreams of wealth thy fancy fill?

No boon untoiled for comes to men.
Nay, turn thou to the Muse again.
For triflers leave thou far behind
The empty phantoms of the mind.

A poem in a more exhilarating tone, but somewhat akin in spirit, seems to refer to an actual ascent of a lofty Hellenic mountain: not a favorite task for Greeks of any age. Happily associated with the climb is the long pursuit of "divine philosophy," and the especial stimulus to the imagination given meantime by poetry. This might well find a place in one of those splendid imaginative passages wherewith Lucretius, as he himself tells us, "sweetens, as if for children, the brim of the cup" wherein he offers the atomic theory, a pre-Darwinian hypothesis of development, and many more commingled draughts of science and sciolism.

Scaling the Heights.

By Onestus.

Clambering toward the Heliconian peak ye wearied, ere a draught
All of nectar from the holy spring of Pegasus ye quaffed.
So the upward path to Wisdom too is arduous, until
From a nobler Hippocrene ye drink, upon the Muses' hill.

There remain to be cited, finally, a series of three poems, highly original in tone and setting, or, at least, remote from the usual range of lyric interest or popular feeling. Nevertheless, their aim is not really doubtful, nor even obscure, to the intelligent and attentive reader. The first, in gentle raillery, questions the right of the "laughing philosopher" to his mirth, and of the "weeping philosopher" to his tears, as if insisting that the tragi-comedy of humanity is at once too piteous, and also too ludicrous, for either.

Eclectic Philosophy.

Anon.

Weep at the state thou art in, far more than when thou wert living,
Sad Heracleitos! In truth wretcheder art thou by far.
Laugh at thy present condition, Democritos, lover of laughter.
Surely above all else is it ridiculous now.
—Yet as I ofttimes muse upon both, full often I wonder,
Why should I sorrow, with thee? Wherefore, with thee, should I laugh?

The next, in far more bitter cynicism, makes the dead believer in immortality respond from his grave, only to renounce his faith held when alive, and proclaim his own absolute annihilation!

Recantation.

By Callimachos.

Cynic. Charidas really under thee lies?
Tombstone. If the son of Arimmos,
From Cyrenè, is he, surely beneath me he lies.
Cynic. Charidas! What of the region below?
Charidas. Deep dark!
Cynic. Resurrection?
Charidas. Lies!
Cynic. And Pluto?
Charidas. A myth! utterly perished are we.

The last poem to be quoted seems especially remote from the age of Meleager, and from the characteristic spirit of the Anthology: or indeed of Classicism in general. The most familiar shape of all appears to dissolve and take on a wholly new form before our eyes. It is, of course, only a spiritualized treatment of Love. It probably does mark an advanced stage of decay, at least, for the lyric art, perhaps also the

passing of paganism itself. Whether it is actually Stoic, Neoplatonic, or Christian, however, may be still a problem for scholars.

Eros Transfigured.

By Marianus.

Where is the bended bow we knew
So well? The feathered shafts that flew
To find in mortal hearts their goal?
Thy wings? Thy torch that seared the soul?
One wreath upon thy head I see,
While in thy hand thou holdest three.
(Respondet Amor)
No vulgar Cypria gave me birth,
Nor am I, stranger, sprung from Earth.
I am not sensual Passion's child.
In minds of mortals undefiled
I light the torch of Knowledge. I
Conduct the soul to Heaven on high.
For the four Virtues woven fair
Four crowns have I: but three in hand I bear,
The noblest, Wisdom's own, upon my forehead wear.

To the translator it seems far more probable that we have crossed the threshold of "Paganism" altogether.

XXII

EPILOGUE

(Written April 13, 1919.)

THIS book is, incidentally, a Palinode for the utterly inadequate glimpse at the Anthology, offered toward the end of the writer's "Introduction to Greek Literature." That volume was still somewhat influenced by the tradition that real literature had stopt abruptly with Plato's or Demosthenes' death, after which only Theocritus, or the whole pastoral triad, at most, had any claim to genius or inspiration. That view had just enough truth in it to make it dangerously misleading.

But a more personal confession is due. The Anthology has already been referred to repeatedly as a "jungle." The present scribe never knew, or seriously sought, the heart of that jungle, until he was lured into it (on a false trail), less than a decade agone. Ever since, the fascination of the Wilderness itself has grown not less, but always stronger.

There are in it filthy morasses, noisome and venomous creatures, perils galore for feeble folk. So had Mowgli's immortal jungle all these; but it proffered, to him, instead, health and strength, wisdom and happiness. Also it had, as he felt, a soul of its own, which he passionately loved, and which adequately returned that love.

After much hesitation and misgiving, the writer feels himself impelled, or rather compelled, to give to this little book the title which alone would rightly indicate its aim and quest: "*The Soul of the Anthology.*" It is, so to speak, a third guess,—such as noble Aragon and Morocco were never granted,—and perhaps it falls aright, at last, on the leaden casket. If so, it is because Life has given the self-blinded

adventurer some broader hints, even, than the partial Portia strews along Bassanio's wavering path.

—Halfway through the rank thicket of the Erotica (Book V, which is the real beginning of the pagan Epigrammata), Meleager was fully discovered. The immediate effect of his Aphrodisiac lyre was as hard to resist as the Tennysonian yellow lotus-pollen forty years earlier. Not that the clarions which roused our errant youthtime, *e.g.*, the *Vita Nuova*, Lowell's "Present Crisis," or indeed "Locksley Hall," were ever really forgotten or abjured. Still, for a while, this frankly naked yet artistic expression of mere sensual passion seemed an unique gift—as it is—and also, the chief gift which the Anthology could offer.

There is no reason for suppressing the personal utterance of gratitude then made. It was sincere: it is not exactly untrue, now: it gives, however, an impression as to the relative importance of the Syrian fickle lover and true but decadent poet, far away from the composer's present judgment.

To Meleagros.

(December, 1911.)

"The maid is fairer far
"Than fragrant garlands are."

As perfume from a shattered jar
This murmurous echo floats afar
From days that were to days that are.
A thousand leagues may intervene,
A score of centuries stretch between
Ourselves and ye that once have been.
Our lost sweet maiden may lie low
As thine beneath December's snow,
Our youth be but a fading dream,
Yet all our own those accents seem,

Ἁ γὰρ παῖς κρέσσων
Ἀδυπνόων στεφάνων.
The maid we love is fairer far
Than ever odorous garlands are.

Never were bitterer tears than thine,
Meleager, dropt in Eros' wine.
Into each man's lot some woes shall fall
From the urn at the gate of Zeus' high hall,
But thou, sweet singer, hast shared them all.
In love, thou sayst, is never less
Of unendurable distress
Than honied happiness.
Therefore men turn thy tearstrained leaf
Once more, from Eros' joy and grief
To find in thy companionship relief.

In Hades or Elysium met,
Or wheresoe'er thou sufferest yet,
If life there be where none forget
The pangs of earthly joy and woe,
I dream I yet thy face may know,
And gladly hear thee chant again
In languorous tones the old refrain:
"The mortal maid is fairer far
"Than any fragrant garlands are."

Nor can I dream that, near or far,
In depths of earth, on outmost star,
Thou findest keener joy and mirth,
Or bitterer pain, than here on earth.

—A thousand paces farther in, and the whole atmosphere and outlook had changed—more than once. There were sunny uplands, natural and cheery sounds. But all unity of meaning, all sense of direction, had been lost. The conviction grew,—

"But there *is* no road thro' the woods."

The myriad voices mingled, even jangled. Hardly any utterance sounded complete, or could be clearly identified.

And then, out of that very bewilderment rose a wondrous charm: the magic of the incomplete, the irrecoverable, the unknowable. So an old abbey, never finished, or hopelessly complicated by century-long changes in plan, and now fallen into decay and utter confusion, might allure, as the first architect's perfected design never could have done: because it leaves full freedom, even license, for every man's vagrant imagination.

This time the utterance of a deeper feeling, on a slight immediate occasion, was recorded and is preserved without so much as a misgiving. It is sincere, and still entirely true. It is, of course, no true End of the Quest. It was probably written in the spring of 1912.

At Artemis' Command.

This Artemis where four roads met
By Demaretos' child was set,
By Agelocheia, yet a maid
Within her father's halls who stayed:
For unto her as a gleam of flame
Beside the loom the goddess came.

Hegesippos, in the Anthology.

To a maid in the weavers' room,
To a lonely girl at the loom,
  As a gleam of Hephaistos' flame
In the twilight's deepening gloom,
  The virgin Artemis came!

Upon us, too, wonderment falls,
Us also the vision enthralls.
By a maid, in her father's halls,
  Was heard high Artemis' voice:

—Bidding her weep, or rejoice?
Did she promise a spotless name?
Was it warning of sorrow and shame?
This shall ye never be told.
To atone for some evil of old,
—To avert some foreseen woe,
—Or, for Artemis willed it so:
Was a statue carven and set
At the place where the highroads met.
This, and not more, may ye know
Of the lone maid ages ago,
Of her wonder, her joy,—or her woe.

Ask not, where the statue stands;
Seek not in the Morning Lands;
Deep-drifted the ages' sands,
Many the roads that crost,
—And the paths of Hellas are lost!

Hegesippos? One minstrel among
The thousand who passing have sung
In this tangled jungle of song
That is fifteen centuries long.
From an age and a land unknown
Comes fluttering down to our own
This leaf, by the rude winds blown.

"Turn, then, the page, and forget
Demaretos' daughter!"

But yet,
O Agelocheia, I know
Still many a day shall I go
Wondering, whether of woe
Or of joy great Artemis came
And spake in a tongue of flame
In a land that I cannot name,
In a land no man shall know,
To a maiden, ages ago.

The writer's versions in various metrical forms (mostly, but not completely, utilized in the present volume) were begun, without any conscious larger purpose, on occasional impulse and as a "by-product." Then the larger original task, though two-thirds rough-finished, was definitely abandoned, this sheaf continued to grow, slowly, and still on merely irregular and chance suggestion, through a series of years.

Then, all within the twelve-month just past, came a succession of three unusual experiences.

In the course of a single month (April, 1918), by no means of leisure, nor of assiduous devotion to this task alone, a full hundred of these renderings took shape almost without conscious effort, often dashed down on paper instantaneously, as if already completed in some chamber of the subconscious mental workshop. (Before, and, indeed, since then, the attempts have been oftener rather laborious mosaics, made with quite imperfect command of such stubborn materials as rhyme or poetic phrasing.)

Then came a sudden and immediate call, essentially of patriotism, to an imperative task, most novel and unforeseen in its nature. For many hours daily, through eight months (June, 1918-January, 1919), in six or seven languages, and in endless and hasty succession, thousands of intimate unrestrained utterances, oftenest mere outcries of love, anxiety, bereavement, loneliness, hope or despair, were to be scanned and weighed by a critical, potentially hostile eye: for which they were very rarely even in part intended.

On the average, from our experience, other folk's "social" epistles fly not high above—often dropping heavily below—the dead level of monotonous commonplace. Yet they none the less stirred the uttermost depths of the alien reader's purely human sympathies.

Gradually, too, these voices seemed to blend in a single though by no means harmonious cry. It would be hardly

fair to cite here Inferno, III, 25-30, though it was strife and sin that produced this chorus of woe, also.*
It appealed to the inward ear as the utterance of all the most elemental mortal needs and emotions. But yet, no suspicion of any close kinship, between this task and the one just laid down, came to the reader's jaded and harrowed mind, so far as he recalls.

. . . The sudden, half-welcome, and premature Armistice took the zest from duties far behind the firing-line. The return to more familiar vocations was not wholly undesired. That was some ten weeks ago. The housewalls, and the hearts, of fellow-men are ceasing to seem quite so transparent, as we walk the streets. In these few weeks since that release, while accidentally isolated from all the most essential reference-books, the author has found himself shaping, eagerly and inevitably rather than easily, this single essay, its score of sections not really in orderly interlinked succession, but closely interlaced, rather, each with nearly every other. It is a somewhat sudden "busheling-up" after seven or eight years of mere accumulated detail. The riddle seems to have solved itself.

There are scores of "poems" in the swollen unwieldly *Corpus Epigrammatum* quite unfit ever to have been written, edited, printed, or read. No self-respecting man can put them into his vernacular speech. Even in Greek, they should be omitted from any text likely ever to be accessible *Virginibus puerisque,* at least. They are no more helpful to decently

* A "friend of ancient date," Professor Charles H. Grandgent, responded instanter to a bold request for a version of the Dantesque passage, here improperly alluded to, in the all but inimitable *terza rima* of the original:

"Accents of horror, tongues of many lands,
"Words loosed by pain, and cries which anger hurls,
"With voices loud and faint, and sound of hands,
"Composed a tumult which forever whirls
"Thro' atmosphere whose darkness passes time,
"As wind-blown sand upon the desert swirls."

adequate expression of Hellenic or general human nature than certain types of *graffiti,* in Pompeii or *Novum Eboracum,* which it is a slander on cleanlier animals to call "beastly." Well, even the undoubted works of really eminent artists, *e.g.,* Martial, Catullus, yes, and the Horace of the Epodes or Satires, are never read entire: Why, then, the often anonymous world-wide sweepings and dregs of the Corpus?

Another mass is merely cheap rhetoricians' variants on things better said, or first said, by others: or, if not wholly repetitious, yet banal, commonplace, without charm in form or value in content. Such chaff is probably more than half. Ah, well, some modern poets have lived to judge their own total output as severely! And Aftertime? Has it turned *all* "the dustheaps of an Athenaeus to gold," as Lowell—if memory serves aright—once declared?

What remains? Neither Professor Mackail nor anyone else, surely, will venture to set a precise limit, like five hundred, to what is worth reading at all. There may be one thousand, certainly not nearly two, that might repay perusal, with some care, in a philological, literary, historical, archaeological, or other seminar. Let us estimate it roughly at ten to fifteen thousand verses.

Nor will many independent judges share Professor Mackail's certainty, that he himself has set aside for us "*all* the very best." The poem that grips hardest the heart of one father—rather than critic—seems not to have been considered fit: *viz.,* the appeal to Charon to help a child across the Stygian pebbles. The broken "Adrian jar" appears to the writer worth a score of Professor Mackail's cruder shards. *Et cetera hic omittenda.*

Of this thousand, or more, or less, many, perhaps one-fifth, of very high average value or interest in themselves, appear to be only by accident, error, or caprice here at all.

An example might be made of the stately historic Epitaphia of Simonides. They long ago were uplifted to the larger ether of the *Corpus Poetarum Lyricorum,* though their eidola may always linger here below also, like Heracles' in Hades.

—"But Simonides is named in the Proem among Meleager's contributors"—Yes: and his work is there likened to "vine-blossoms!" One or two skolia (songs for convivial banquets), like Poseidippos'

Dole, Attic jar, thy Bacchic dew,

would have best fitted such a comparison: and they, also, must best have suited Meleager's taste, as well as his simile. "When, then, were these famous inscriptions admitted here?" Whenever this evergrowing mass came to be considered not a choice selection of sweetest blossoms, with a decided Meleagrian fragrance, but rather as a general receptacle for all poetry of the various Epigramma-types. So the present writer surmises, at least.

At any rate, all such material as is here discussed, and ensampled, in XVIII, XIX, and XXI, and much elsewhere, either dates from the heroic ages (down to the fourth century B. C.), or is a part of that continuous later literary tradition whose attention is still largely turned backward on that more glorious vanished time. If in the forest, it is not of it, any more than Uxmal, and the other lost or "buried" temples and cities of Yucatan.

There still remain the copious many-sided records of the unambitious contemporary life—outward life and spiritual both, of course—made through the long series of decadent centuries, from Meleager and his chief contributors to Paulus Silentiarius and his friends. Even when the latter are most artificial, they may with some success imitate Meleager, but never Simonides, or any still older art. In these centuries,

and their records, the essayist seeks, and believes he finds, the living body, and deathless soul, of the true *Anthologia.*

Hackneyed already, here as elsewhere, is Emerson's sentence, meant for bold prophecy alone: "That which is now Life shall be Poetry." But already one race had lived, in whom the instinct for plastic form, art, poetry, feeling for beauty, was all-pervasive and inevitable as the first gasp for breath, or hunger, or sensual desires, in other men.

In its busiest days, that folk—very humanly—kept no *journal intime.* In the more leisurely times of its still lovable decline, there were only too many clever hands, eager and apt, to delineate every incident, to sketch every salient detail. Thus the great Corpus grew, and is preserved. Its inner harmony is the imperfect but mighty one of life itself, without the drums and trumpets of the more heroic time. To the work of almost any one among these simple sensuous unambitious poets might the colophon be added:

> No farsought fancies, deep-delved thoughts, he brings.
> The Harp of Life has few and simple strings,
> And everyone has rung a thousand times
> To the firm touch of minstrels new or old.
> Man's heart is one, tho' speech be manifold:
> And love, joy, sorrow, throb in all our rhymes.

REFERENCE LIST TO THE GREEK ORIGINALS

References to the Books and Numbers of the Palatine MS. and to "Book XVI" (the poems found in the Planudean MS. only) are invariably given as revised by W. R. Paton (Loeb, text and prose translation, London and New York, 1915-1918), as that is the latest and most accessible complete text. In the numbering of the (incomplete) Teubner text, the Didot with Latin translations, and Mackail's selection, the variations are slight. For three poems admitted from other sources the translator is indebted to Mr. Mackail, in whose selection they will be easily found.

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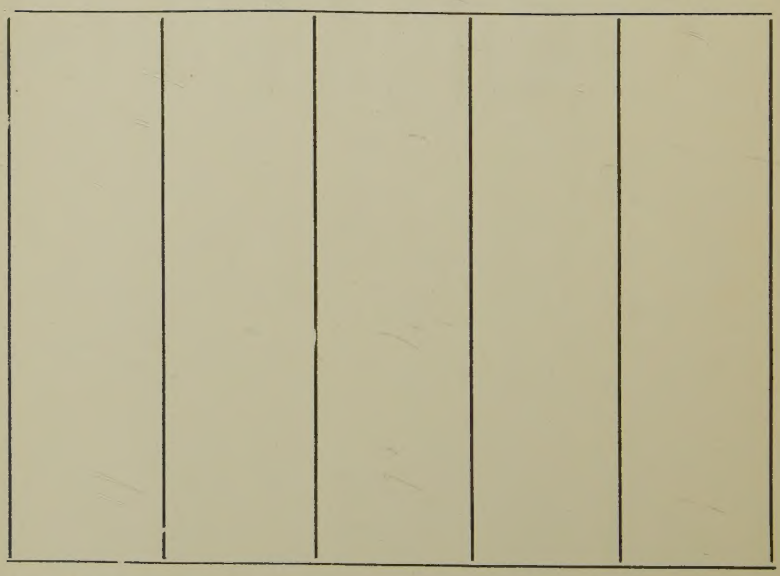

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